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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD

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THE WRITINGS OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL HAZEN.

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 3 May 1782.

The enemy, persisting in that barbarous line of conduct, they have pursued during the course of this war, have lately most inhumanly executed Captain Joshua Huddy, of the Jersey State troops, taken prisoner by them at a post on Tom's River; and in consequence I have written to the British Commander-in-chief, that, unless the perpetrators of that horrid deed were delivered up, I should be under the disagreeable necessity of retaliating, as the only means left to put a stop to such inhuman proceedings.

You will, therefore, immediately on receipt of this, designate by lot for the above purpose, a British captain, who is an unconditional prisoner, if such a one is in our possession; if not, a lieutenant under the same circumstances from among the prisoners at any of the posts, either in Pennsylvania or Maryland. So soon as you have fixed on the person, you will send him under a safeguard to Philadelphia, where the minister of war will order a proper guard to receive and conduct him to the place of his destination.

For your information respecting the officers, who are prisoners in our possession, I have ordered the commissary of prisoners to furnish you with a list of them. It will be forwarded with this. I need not mention to you, that every possible tenderness, that is consistent with the security of him, should be shown to the person whose unfortunate lot it may be to suffer. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL JAMES ROBERTSON.[1]

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 May, 1782.

I had the honor to receive your letter of the 1st instant. Your Excellency is acquainted with the determination expressed in my letter of the 21st of April to Sir Henry Clinton. I have now to inform you, that, so far from receding from that resolution, orders are given to designate a British officer for retaliation. The time and place are fixed; but I still hope the result of your court-martial will prevent this dreadful alternative.

Sincerely lamenting the cruel necessity, which alone can induce so distressing a measure in the present instance, I do assure your Excellency, I am as earnestly desirous as you can be, that the war may be carried on agreeable to the rules, which humanity formed, and the example of the politest nations

[1] For nearly three years Sir Henry Clinton had from time to time solicited his recall, and at length the King granted him permission to return to Europe, which he received the last week in April. The command then devolved on General Robertson. He retained this station, however, only about a week, when Sir Guy Carleton arrived in New York, and took command of the British armies in America, as the permanent successor of Sir Henry Clinton.

recommends, and shall be extremely happy in agreeing with you to prevent or punish every breach of the rules of war within the sphere of our respective commands.

I am unacquainted with the circumstances of the detention of Badgely and Hatfield. The matter shall be examined into and justice done ; but I must inform you, that in my opinion deserters, or characters, who for crimes they have committed are amenable to the civil power, cannot on either side be protected under the sanction of a flag. I do not pretend to say, the abovementioned persons are in that predicament.

Recrimination would be useless. I forbear, therefore, to mention numerous instances, which have stained the reputation of your arms, marked the progress of this war with unusual severity, and disgraced the honor of human nature itself. While I wave this ungrateful discussion, I repeat the assertion, that it is my most ardent desire, not only to soften the inevitable calamities of war, but even to introduce on every occasion as great a share of tenderness and humanity as can possibly be exercised in a state of hostility.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] "In answer to my letter the British general informs me, that a court-martial is ordered for the trial of the persons complained of ; but at the same time says, that those people offer, in justification of the fact, a number of instances of cruelty committed by us, and particularly in Monmouth county. Though this is by no means admitted, but on the contrary orders are given to designate and send to camp a British officer, who, if my demand is not complied with, will be executed ; yet I cannot forbear observing to your Excellency, that, whilst we demand satisfaction from the enemy for the violences they commit, it becomes us to be particularly careful, that they have not a like claim on us ; and I must beg you to make it known to all persons acting in a military capacity in your State, that I shall hold myself obliged to deliver up to the enemy, or otherwise to punish, such of them as shall commit any act, which is in the

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

DEAR SIR, HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG, 4 May, 1782.

By the letter to Brigadier-General Hazen, which I have enclosed to you under a flying seal for your inspection, you will observe the distressing alternative to which we are at last reduced. I must request you will give that letter a safe and speedy conveyance.

As soon as the British officer, whose unfortunate lot it is to be designated as the object of retaliation, shall arrive in Philadelphia, it will be necessary to have a sufficient escort, under the command of a very discreet and vigilant officer, in readiness to receive and

least contrary to the laws of war, I doubt not of your doing the same with those, who come under the civil power.

"The enemy also complain of the detention of Hatfield and Badgely, who, they say, were out by direction of our commissary of prisoners under sanction of a flag. I must beg your Excellency to inform me, as soon as possible, of the circumstances attending their capture, and the causes of their detention. If those causes are not strictly just, I could wish they were sent in."—*Washington to Governor Livingston*, 6 May, 1782. One Hatfield had offered in the spring of 1780 to supply Washington with intelligence, and though the General was "suspicious of the man" he did employ him, but to what extent is not known. This was thought to be Moses Hatfield, and may have been the same who is thus associated with Isaac Badgely. These two men were condemned as guilty of treason by the civil tribunal of New Jersey.

"As I had the honor in my last [June 10th] of transmitting the circumstances relating to Hatfield and Badgely, to inform you, that, finding them entirely in the hands of the civil power, it was not within my line to say any thing further on the subject; so, from the tenor of your letter, it becomes necessary for me now to be very explicit in mentioning to your Excellency, that, in matters of civil resort, I am not authorized, in any case, to make the least interference. The civil laws, within the several States, having been passed without any agency of mine, I am equally excluded from any part in their execution; neither is it to be supposed, that they are under any control or influence from me. The civil power, therefore, of the States only being competent to the discussion of civil points, I shall leave them solely to their consideration, being determined to confine myself to the proper line of my duty, which is purely military."—*Washington to Sir Guy Carleton*, 22 June, 1782.

conduct him to the cantonment of the troops of New Jersey. I pray you will be pleased to give the orders proper for the occasion, and direct the officer commanding the party to apply to the commandant of the Jersey line, who will have final instructions respecting the matter.

Keenly wounded as my feelings will be, at the deplorable destiny of the unhappy victim, no gleam of hope can arise to him but from the conduct of the enemy themselves. This he may be permitted to communicate to the British Commander-in-chief, in whose power alone it rests to avert the impending vengeance from the innocent by executing it on the guilty. At the same time it may be announced, that I will receive no application nor answer any letter on the subject, which does not inform me that ample satisfaction is made for the death of Captain Huddy on the perpetrators of that horrid deed. * * *[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 May, 1782.

SIR,

I find myself arrived at that period, at which I hoped to have seen the battalions of the several States completed to their establishment, in conformity to the requisitions of Congress of the 19th of December last.

The enclosed returns of recruits, which I have caused to be made up to the 1st instant, will show how totally short of my ex-

[1] General Lincoln, by some error, informed Washington that there was no "unconditional prisoner of war" available, and Washington on the 18th directed Hazen to carry out the instructions of the 3d.

pectations the exertions of the States have fallen. From your State you will find that only recruits have joined the army in consequence of the above requisition.[1]

All my accounts from Europe concur in declaring, that the British King and ministry are still determined to prosecute the war. It becomes, therefore, our decided duty to be prepared to meet these hostile intentions, in whatever way they are to be carried into execution ; to do which, our utmost exertions are now called for. You will suffer me therefore to entreat, that, if your State has any expectation from the military operations of this season, not another moment may be lost in providing for and carrying into most effectual execution the full completion of their battalions. It is scarcely necessary to inform you, that on this expectation all our calculations must be formed, and on this event must rest the hopes of the ensuing campaign.

My intelligence of the actual aid we may expect from our allies is not yet so explicit as will lead me to decide absolutely on the mode of operations for this campaign ; but were our expectations of support from that quarter ever so promising, yet, from the negligence and languor of the States, from whence our own exertions are to spring, I am not at this day enabled to give any assurance of our being prepared to coöperate with our allies in any great objects equal to their expectations of our own ability. I am sorry to acquaint your Excellency, that I have the best authority to assure you, that the court of France is much dissatisfied with this want of vigor and exertion in the States, and with that disposition, which appears willing at least, if not desirous, to cast all the burthen of the American War upon them. Waving the injustice and impolicy of such a temper, (which to me appear very conspicuous,) how humiliating is the idea, that our dependence for support should rest on others, beyond that point which absolute necessity dictates ; how discouraging to our allies, and how dishonorable to ourselves must be our want of vigor and

[1] The second paragraph in the letter is altered to Virginia and Maryland, and the following substituted, viz. :

"From the returns I have been able to obtain of recruits furnished by the several States, I am very sorry to observe that their exertions to this time have almost totally disappointed this expectation."—*Note by Washington.*

utmost exertion, at a time when, if we are not wanting to ourselves, our prospects are the fairest that our wishes could extend to.

I find from the proceedings of the several States, that their calculation of deficiencies, formed on application to the several towns, who furnish the men, are greatly different from the returns sent from the army. I forbear mentioning many reasons, which might be assigned to produce this difference, and which in my opinion originate principally within the States, and will content myself with this one observation, that, should the States deceive themselves in this respect, and fail to furnish the expected force in the field, they will not only cast an essential injury upon the army, but the unhappy consequences of a failure in their expectations from a military operation will reverberate upon themselves, whilst recrimination can have no effect towards alleviating our protracted misfortunes and distress.

Although money matters are not within the line of my duty, yet, as they are so intimately connected with all military operations; and being lately informed by the financier in answer to some small requisitions upon him, that he has not yet received one penny in money from any one State, upon the requisition of Congress for the eight millions of dollars, but that, on the contrary, some of the States are devising ways to draw from him the small sums he has been able otherwise to establish, and that he is at this time barely able to feed the army, and that from hand to mouth; I cannot forbear to express my apprehensions from that quarter, and to urge, with the warmth of zeal and earnestness, the most pointed and effectual attention of your State to the actual raising and collecting of its proportion of the requisition. Upon the present plan of non-compliance with requisitions for men and supplies, let me seriously ask your Excellency, How is it possible for us to continue the war? How is it possible to support an army in money or recruits? To what a wretched state must we soon be reduced? How dangerous is it to suffer our affairs to run at hazard, and to depend upon contingencies? To what do the present measures tend, but to the utter ruin of that cause, which we have hitherto so long and nobly supported, and to crush all the fair hopes, which the present moment places before us, were we only to exert the power and abilities with which Provi-

dence has bountifully blessed this country? But if the States will not impose, or do not collect and apply, taxes for support of the war, the sooner we make terms the better; the longer we continue a feeble and ineffectual war, the greater will be our distress at the hour of submission. For my own part, I am fully convinced, that, without the *means* of execution, no officer, whoever he may be, who is placed at the head of the military department, can be answerable for the success of any plans he may propose or agree to.

Upon this subject I will only add, that, from past experience and from present prospects, I am persuaded, that, if the States would furnish the supplies agreeable to the late requisition, and would suffer the pay, clothing, and subsistence of the army to go through one common channel, that two thirds of their former expenses would be saved; and many partialities, discontents, and jealousies, which now subsist, would be removed and cease, and an establishment of order, regularity, and harmony in our general affairs would be experienced, which cannot arise from the present disjointed and different systems of finance adopted by separate States.

While acting in my military capacity, I am sensible of the impropriety of stepping into the line of civil polity. My anxiety for the general good, and an earnest desire to bring this long protracted war to a happy issue, when I hope to retire to that peaceful state of domestic pleasures, from which the call of my country has brought me to take an active part, and to which I most ardently wish a speedy return, I hope will furnish my excuse with your Excellency and legislature, while I request your pardon for this trespass. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. *May 8th.*—Since writing the above, I have been furnished with sundry New York papers, and an English paper, containing the last intelligence from England, with the debates of Parliament upon several motions made respecting the American war. Lest your Excellency may not have been favored with so full a sight of these papers as I have, I take the liberty to mention, that I have perused these debates with great attention and care, with a view if possible to penetrate their real design; and, upon the most mature deliberation I can bestow, I am obliged to

declare it as my candid opinion, that the measure in all their views, so far as they respect America, is merely delusory, having no serious intention to admit our independence upon its true principles, but is calculated to produce a change of ministers to quiet the minds of their own people, and reconcile them to a continuance of the war; while it is meant to amuse this country with a false idea of peace, to draw us off from our connexion with France, and to lull us into a state of security and inactivity, which taking place, the ministry will be left to prosecute the war in other parts of the world with greater vigor and effect. Your Excellency will permit me on this occasion to observe, that, even if the nation and Parliament are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will undoubtedly be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands, and, instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in treaty by preparing, (even in the moment of negotiation,) most vigorously for the field.

The industry which the enemy are using to propagate their pacific reports, appears to me a circumstance very suspicious; and the eagerness with which the people, as I am informed are catching at them, is in my opinion equally dangerous.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 May, 1782.

I do myself the honor to transmit to your Excellency the enclosed papers, No. 1 to — inclusive. They contain a continuance of the correspondence, which

[1] "If I should have occasion for the Militia of your state, the call will be sudden, and their movements must be rapid, otherwise great expense will accrue and only disgrace and disappointment will ensue. For these reasons I beg leave to recall your Excellency's attention to my letter of the 5 March last, and to pray most earnestly that every previous arrangement may be taken to facilitate their march when requested."—*To Virginia and Maryland. Note by Washington.*

has been produced between me, General Robertson, and Sir Henry Clinton, in the case of Captain Huddy. That from Sir Henry Clinton did not come to hand till some days after the receipt of General Robertson's letter, and after my reply to the latter. I am in daily expectation of an answer from General Robertson, which I hope will bring this ungrateful business to a conclusion.

I take this opportunity to convey to Congress sundry English and New York newspapers, which have within a few days past been put into my hands. Their contents are new and interesting, and I take the earliest occasion to present them to Congress.

Although I view the debates, so far as they convey proposals of pacification to America, to be idle and delusory, yet I cannot but express my fears for the effect they may have upon the exertions of the States, which are already too feeble and void of energy. The people, so far as I am informed, are catching at the idea of peace with great eagerness; and the industry which the enemy are using for its propagation is to me a very suspicious circumstance. For my own part, I view our situation such, that, instead of relaxing, we ought to improve the present moment as the most favorable to our wishes. The British nation appear to be staggered and almost ready to sink beneath the accumulated weight of debt and misfortune. If we follow the blow with vigor and energy, I think the game is our own.[1]

[1] "We wanted no fresh opiate to increase that stupor into which we had fallen, but I much fear that the idle, and delusive offers of Peace with which the Country resounds, will, if it is not powerfully counteracted, be exceedingly

Just as I was closing these despatches, I received a letter from Sir Guy Carleton, covering sundry printed papers, a copy of which, with the papers, I have now the honor to enclose to your Excellency, together with the copy of my answer to him; and I flatter myself, that my conduct therein will be agreeable to the wishes of Congress. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

injurious to us—not (I apprehend) from any disposition in the people to listen to improper terms, but from a misconception of what is really meant, and the arts which are used to make them believe that Independence, and what not, are proffered to them. Under these ideas they ask, why need we be taxed, or why need we be put to the expence and trouble of compleating our Battalions?

"It is to be hoped that the despatches which are now on their passage to Congress, will announce the aids which are intended for us by the Court of France, as it is high time the plan of campaign was known, which cannot be the case till we have materials to project one. Would to God there may not be too much truth in the British account (in the York Gazettes) of the advantages gained by her in the naval action off Guadaloupe—it may be productive of a total derangement of the plans of the French Court, this campaign."—*Washington to R. R. Livingston*, 22 May, 1782.

"What may be the real intention of the present Ministry, respecting America—or what effect the naval action in the West Indies may have upon the intended operations of this year, and consequently upon the conduct of the Powers at war, is difficult to say. There is, however, one plain line chalked out for us; by pursuing which we cannot err; and it gives me pleasure to hear that Congress are inculcating this by a deputation from their own Body. If Rodney's victory is as decisive and important as the New York gazettes endeavor to make it; and the new Ministry should not be too much buoyed up by it; there is no measure so likely to produce a speedy termination of the *War* as vigorous preparations for meeting the enemy in full expectation of it, if they are only playing the insidious game. This will make them think of Peace in good earnest."—*Washington to Robert R. Livingston*, 5 June, 1782.

[1] Read in Congress, May 13th.

The papers enclosed in the letter were printed copies of the proceedings of the House of Commons, on the 4th of March, 1782, respecting an address to the King in favor of peace; and also a copy of the bill reported in consequence thereof, enabling his Majesty to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted colonies in North America.

The French cabinet were somewhat concerned as to the effect, which these movements of the British Parliament might have in America. As soon as

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 May, 1782.

I had the honor last evening to receive your Excellency's letter of the 7th, with the several papers enclosed. Ever since the commencement of this unnatural war, my conduct has borne invariable testimony against those inhuman excesses, which, in too many instances, have marked its various progress. With respect to a late transaction, to which I pre-

they were known at Versailles, Count de Vergennes wrote to M. de la Luzerne expressing his apprehensions.

"The object of the British King," said he, "in acceding to these resolutions, is obvious. He would persuade the Americans, that he is sincerely disposed to a reconciliation, and would spare nothing to impress this persuasion by influencing their feelings towards England, and causing them to be unfaithful to France. On examining the comparative situation of England and America, one could hardly hesitate to decide what impression these resolutions should make; yet the strong propensity of the Americans to inactivity; their need of peace and the désire they manifest for it; the embarrassment as to their means of continuing the war; the great number of English partisans among them; all these causes united are enough to excite the fear, that the wishes of the people may prevail over the patriotism and zeal of Congress, and that this body will be forced to lend an ear to the pretended pacific overtures of the court of London. Such a step would of course be infinitely disagreeable to France, because it would effectually change the object and mode of prosecuting the war; it would augment the hostile resources of England, and would cause France to lose a great part of the fruit of her offensive efforts in carrying on the war for the independence of America. It is therefore of the highest importance, that the United States should continue of the same principles as heretofore, remain immovably attached to the alliance, and follow the example of France in refusing to listen to a separate peace with England. Every principle of honor and interest requires this conduct in the Americans.

"It should not be concealed from you, that the English ministry have recently sent a secret emissary to us, with propositions for a separate peace. The conditions, which he offered, were such as would have satisfied the King, if he had been without allies. He stipulated, among other things, the *uti possidetis*, the suppression of the English commission at Dunkirk, and advantages in India. But these offers did not move the King. His Majesty acknowledges no other rule, than that which is traced in his engagements; and he answered, that, however ardent might be his wishes for the reëstablishment of peace, he could not commence a negotiation to that end without the

sume your Excellency alludes, I have already expressed my resolution, a resolution, formed on the most mature deliberation, and from which I shall not recede. I have to inform your Excellency, that your request of a passport for Mr. Morgann, to go to Philadelphia, shall be conveyed to Congress by the earliest opportunity; and I will embrace the first moment, that I shall have it in my power, to communicate to you their determination thereon.[1]

participation of his allies. The English commissioner replied, that he perfectly understood this answer to refer to America, as well as Spain, but objected, that recognising the independence of the colonies did not enter into the system of England. I replied, that this was the basis of the system of the King. Upon this he asked, if there was no mode of treating with France without involving the affairs of America. I sent to him for answer the first pacific overtures, which we had communicated to the mediators. I added, that, whether England should treat of the affairs of America with us, or hold a direct negotiation with the United States, she could not avoid treating with the deputies of Congress; and thus she would be compelled to recognise the authority of that body. I cannot say whether any thing will result from this advance on the part of the English ministry, whether it was meant as an apple of discord between us and our allies; but, whatever may have been the intention, the issue ought at least to be a new and strong proof to the Americans of the fidelity of the King to his engagements, and to convince them of the extreme injustice of deviating from his example."—*MS. Letter from Vergennes to Luzerne*, Versailles, March 23, 1782.

A few days afterwards, in writing again upon the same subject, Count de Vergennes said:

"Although we desire that Congress may neither open a direct negotiation, nor make a separate peace, yet we have no wish to prevent that body from following the system, which we ourselves have traced in our answer to the mediating courts. We are and always shall be disposed to consent, that the American plenipotentiaries in Eur pe shall treat, in conformity to their instructions, directly and without our intervention, with those from the court of London, while we shall be engaged in a negotiation on our part; provided that the two negotiations shall proceed with an equal progress, that the two treaties shall be signed at the same time, and that neither of them shall take effect without the other."—*MS. Letter*, April 9th—*Sparks*.

[1] On the very day on which Congress received Washington's letter, Madison could write that the request of Carleton "will certainly be refused, and General Washington directed to receive and forward any despatches which may be

Many inconveniences and disorders having arisen from an improper admission of flags at various posts of the two armies, which have given rise to complaints on both sides; to prevent abuses in future, and for the convenience of communication, I have concluded to receive all flags, from within your lines, at the post of Dobbs's Ferry, and nowhere else, so long as the head-quarters of the two armies remain as at present. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

properly addressed to Congress," and when an audience was given to the French minister, on the 13th, "it was deemed politic at this crisis to display every proper evidence of affectionate attachment to our ally."

"Sir Guy Carleton attempted to commence a correspondence with Congress, but that assembly wholly declined his advances. He then wrote to some of the governors of the States, but their answers were equally pointed and repulsive. He next addressed himself to the people, not directly, but through the channel of the newspapers in New York; exhorting them to change their leaders and recall their present members of Congress, and speaking of the new disposition for reconciliation and peace on the part of the mother country; but all without effect. Another attempt is to humiliate Congress by representing them to be under the influence of France, and particularly of the French minister in the United States. But he has used another instrument more powerful than these. He treats all the Americans, who fall into his hands, with extreme kindness; exhorts them not to bear arms against Great Britain; admits freely into New York the wives of the captains of vessels, which have been taken and brought into that harbor, and at their solicitation releases their husbands. And he has even written to General Washington, that he will send back the captured Carolinians in the King's ships and at the King's expense; and that he would do all in his power to cause them to forget their past injuries."—*Luzerne to Vergennes*, 14 June, 1782.

[1] It was decided by Congress, that the Commander-in-chief should be directed to refuse a passport for Mr. Morgann to bring despatches to Philadelphia.—*Journals*, May 14th. The advances of Sir Guy Carleton bore so strong a similarity to those of the commissioners in 1778, which proved delusive and fruitless, that Congress deemed it advisable not to open any door for an intercourse through this channel, and more especially as the business of negotiating a peace was entrusted to the American commissioners in Europe.

Had the tenor of Sir Guy Carleton's instructions been known in America, it is probable that a more conciliating temper would have been shown by Con-

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

HEADQUARTERS, 17 May, 1782.

SIR:

I have been honored with your Favor of the 23d of April—The Information it contains is in some Respects, pleasing and important—I thank you for the Communication; and need not assure you, that your Confidence shall never be abused by me.

gress. The late change of ministry had produced a change in the determinations of the British Cabinet, and in the measures for prosecuting the war, wholly unexpected and as yet not even conjectured in the United States. This will appear by the following extracts from the directions of the new secretary at war to Sir Guy Carleton when he left England:

"The first object of your attention must be the withdrawing of the garrison, artillery, provisions, stores of all kinds, and every species of public property from New York and its dependencies to Halifax. The same steps are to be taken with reference to the garrisons of Charleston and Savannah. The garrison of St. Augustine you will determine upon according to circumstances on your arrival. The execution of the whole, both in point of mode and time, is left to your discretion. In case you should meet with obstructions by any attack supported by a formidable force, or from disappointments, so that it will not be in your power to effect the evacuation without great hazard of considerable loss, an early capitulation, which may secure the main object, is thought preferable to an obstinate defence of the place without hope of answering any national purpose by it.

"In the execution of his Majesty's command you must always bear in recollection, that the removal and reservation of his Majesty's troops for his service is the immediate object, to which all other considerations must give way. But you must likewise lose no time to avail yourself of the change of measures which has lately taken place, for the purpose of reconciling the minds and affections of his Majesty's American subjects, by such open and generous conduct as may serve to captivate their hearts, and remove every suspicion of insincerity. With this view, it may be well worthy of your most serious consideration, whether, though you should not meet with the obstructions we have now too much reason to apprehend, it would not be best to take the part of communicating, immediately upon your arrival, the enclosed resolutions of the House of Commons, bearing as they do incontestable marks of the universal sense of the kingdom, and his Majesty's resolution, in consequence, of withdrawing the troops. You may state every circumstance, if occasion offers, which has passed or is passing here, which can tend to revive old affections or

In a circular Letter which I have lately written to the States, I have taken occasion to mention the failure you experience from them, in their non-payment of the Sums demanded by the Requisition of Congress for the 8.000.000 Dollars.—I have represented in the most pointed terms I could use, the ill Effects this failure must have upon our military Operations ;

extinguish late jealousies. You may observe, that the most liberal sentiments have taken root in the nation."—*MS. Instructions to Sir Guy Carleton*, April 4th.

It is obvious from these instructions that Sir Guy Carleton had a very delicate and difficult task to perform, especially as in the present state of feeling in America it would have been impossible for him to make himself believed for a moment, if he had communicated the sentiments of the British ministry. Even the cautious course which he found it necessary to adopt excited suspicions of his sincerity, and an apprehension that some design was at bottom which required to be guarded against, as is manifest from Washington's letters and all the proceedings of Congress. No one had dreamed that it was seriously the purpose of the British ministry at this time to evacuate all the maritime posts in the United States. The object of the ministry was a vigorous prosecution of the war in the West Indies against France and Spain, having already determined to concede the independence of the thirteen colonies.

The real intentions of the British cabinet, however, were early penetrated by Count de Vergennes. Within three weeks after the departure of Sir Guy Carleton from England, that minister wrote as follows to M. de la Luzerne.

"Every appearance indicates, that the British intend withdrawing their forces from the United States ; or, at least, that the war will not be prosecuted there any more. They are probably preparing to continue the war in the Islands against the House of Bourbon. Attempts are made for a separate peace. Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams will undoubtedly render an account of the proposals which have been offered to them. Their language has been firm, and in the true principles of the alliance. In this respect we cannot applaud them too highly, and you may testify to Congress our entire satisfaction. If the English continue hostilities on the continent, it will be interesting to see in what manner the Americans will endeavour to render themselves useful to an ally, who has served them so largely. I do not expect from them much effective aid ; but I hope they will be sufficiently enlightened not to ascribe to the good-will of the new ministry that which cannot and ought not to be considered in any other light than as the effect of their weakness."—*MS. Letter from Vergennes to Luzerne*, Versailles, May 2d.—*Sparks*.

—and have urged them, with the warmth of zeal & earnestness to a full & speedy compliance with your Expectations.—I wish this application may have its desired effect.

I am experiencing much Trouble from Complaints of the Army against Mr. Sands's execution of his Contracts. By last post I transmitted to the Secretary of War, Copies of proceedings respecting the Contract for West point and its dependencies. & inclosed you will have those under the Contract for moving the Army.—It appears pretty evident to me, that the Contractors for the latter have availed themselves of Mr. Sands's knowledge and Experience to reject every thing in the new one, that did not immediately tend to his ease and emolument in the old one;—and which like every thing else of the kind, that is not attended with mutual convenience, must effect its own reformation or destruction.—*For it cannot be expected that an Army which has suffered every species of hardship and distress, that could arise from want of pay, deficiencies in their rations, and (till now) want of Cloathing, will submit contentedly to a measure which is not warranted by the Usage and customs of any other Army, merely because it is convenient and beneficial to the Contractors*—Every man must know, and Mr. Sands acknowledges it, that issuing to a Regiment at one Draft, does not give to each Man the Ration which is prescribed for him by the Contract; and to compell the Officers, who may wish to corn a little Beef, or, by way of change to furnish their Tables with Poultry, or the smaller

kinds of Meat—or who may sometimes be from camp, or Quarters, and at other Times wish to entertain a friend, to take their Allowance in the same draft, and at the same time with the Men, whether their necessities call for more or less, or forfeit it, is not only unusual, but extremely hard and disagreeable to them; and will, if continued, be productive of serious Consequences—not only from their disquietudes, but the Jealousies which will prevail among the *Men*, who with or without cause, will suspect that the Officers not only take their *full Allowance*, but will have it of the *choisest pieces* leaving them to share the *deficiency* in that which is more *indifferent.* * * * Besides, as the Contractors seem to think themselves under no *legal* Obligation, or controul to fulfill their Contract,—and are determined to encounter no Expence which they can possibly avoid,—I may be thwarted by & by in my Disposition of the Troops; because, by increasing their Clerks, it will add to their Expence. These Considerations, & the incessant Complaints which I am obliged to hear, & which engages a large portion of my Time, induces me to urge again, that the person who is to be the Arbiter of them may come forward without delay.

I have not made these observations from a disinclination to support this Contract, or any other System by which the public interest can be promoted; and I should do injustice to the Officers of this Army, was I not to declare, that as far as my opportunities have gone (and I have conversed freely on the subject

from the General to the Ensign) they seem equally well disposed to carry it into execution; but they can see no reason why the Contractors should pocket the benefits which flow from their distresses.

If the Officers could receive their pay, or even their subsistence regularly, more especially, if they could, as I am told is the Custom with the British Service, have always a month of the latter in advance it is possible they would renounce both Sands & his Issues; but having none of the former & with difficulty come at the latter, it is both inconvenient and mortifying to them to be tyed up as they are, when it does not appear that the public interest is advanced by it; but admitting it is so in a small degree, we may spin the thread of Œconomy 'till it breaks.—Minds sowered by distresses are easily rankled—as a specimen of it, the privates of the Connecticut Line were the other day upon the eve of a general Mutiny, the vigilence of the Officers discovered it a few hours before they were to parade & the ring leaders have been tryed & executed—besides this, desertions are more prevalent than ever; by the last Returns a greater number went off than ever did in the same space before,—and tho' I know how much you have laboured for the means of paying the Army, & how inapplicable the remark is to you, 'till you are furnished with these, I cannot help adding, that it is very difficult, if not impracticable to convince Military Men whose interests, feelings & wants are continually goading them, that people holding Civil offices are better entitled to receive the wages of service, punctually than they are.—I mention these things, my Dear Sir, not so much because I think it in your power to afford redress,

as because, I think you should be acquainted with the temper that prevails.

I might have mentioned too in a more proper place, that while Mr. Sands was saving fifty or an hundred pounds in the establishment of his Issues, the public have expended, from the information I receive, at least 4000 pair of shoes & 1000 blankets extraordinary in transporting, two or three miles over rugged roads, the provision from these places on Men's shoulders,—however I do not blame Mr. Sands more for this, than the Officer who permitted it.

May 25th.

I had written the foregoing part of this Letter before I received the inclosed complaints, from which it appears that the Officers do not agree in sentiment with me in receiving their subsistence in money & purchasing their own provisions; But placing the matter as they do upon the footing of Right, their Observation shows that without their concurrence, the difficulties cannot be compounded in that way.

Upon the whole matter, that the Army may not appear to be forming complaints without pointing to a remedy, I have prepared the general Outline of a System of Issues, which if adopted would in my Opinion, be equitable & satisfactory—This I intended to have sent to you by this Conveyance but to save Trouble & Delay have concluded it will be best to take the Sentiments of Mr. Sands & some of the most sensible & judicious Officers upon it; that all parties *here* may be agreed previous to communicatg. it for your Approbation.

(*Altho' Mr. Sands has been repeatedly urged to furnish the stipulated Deposits for West point, yet that important post is now almost without a Barrel of salted provisions; by which means it is in a most alarmg. Situation, not being able, were the Enemy to make a sudden Attempt upon it, to hold a seige of three Days.*) Add to this Omission, the whole Army have been without Meat of any kind, for three or four Days past.—I am at a loss to account for these neglects—I can only tell you the serious truth & ask what Remedy is provided in such Cases?—how is Mr. Sands to be compelled to perform his Duty? and where is the compulsory power lodged?

I fear you will think this Letter very tedious—but the subject required much to be said. I have mentioned to the Secy. at War, this Communication & have desired him to assist you in its Consideration. —I hope, that on Consultation, you will afford us speedy Relief, as I know not to what Extremities the present Uneasiness may push us. I am &c.[1]

TO COLONEL LEWIS NICOLA.

SIR, NEWBURG, 22 May, 1782.

With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, Sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as

[1] The italicized parts of this letter were written in cypher.

you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. For the present the communicatn. of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs, that can befall my Country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and, as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your Country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.[1]

[1] The above remarkable letter is a transcript from the first draft in Washington's handwriting. The following certificate is appended to it, and is also in the same handwriting, except the signatures, which are autographs of the signers.

"The foregoing is an exact copy of a letter, which we sealed and sent off to Colonel Nicola, at the request of the writer of it.

"D. HUMPHREYS, *A. D. C.*

"JONATHAN TRUMBULL, JUN., *Secretary.*"

The discontents among the officers and soldiers in the army, respecting the arrearages of their pay and their future prospects, had already increased to an

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL HAZEN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 June, 1782.

SIR,

I have received your favor of the 27th of May, and am much concerned to find, that Captain Asgill has been sent on, notwithstanding the information, which you had received, of there being two unconditional prisoners of war in our possession. I much

alarming degree. Colonel Nicola, being a man of respectable character, somewhat advanced in life, and also on terms of intimacy with the Commander-in-chief, seems to have been much consulted by the other officers, and made a medium for communicating verbally their complaints, grievances, and apprehensions. To these Washington had listened with his usual complaisance, with an unfeigned expression of feeling for the distresses of the troops, and an unqualified declaration, that no efforts on his part should be wanting to procure for them the justice and remuneration which their long services and sacrifices had merited.

In this stage of affairs, either of his own motion, or from the instigation of others, Colonel Nicola addressed to the Commander-in-chief a paper of an extraordinary tenor, which drew from him the above reply. After some general remarks on the deplorable condition of the army, and the little hope they could have of being properly rewarded by Congress, the Colonel proceeds to a political disquisition on the different forms of government, and comes to the conclusion that republics are, of all others, the least susceptible of stability, and the least capable of securing the rights, freedom, and property of individuals. His inference is, that America can never prosper, or become a nation, under such a form. The English government he considers the most successful experiment that has yet been tried. Then reverting somewhat in detail to the financial operations of the war, and to the multiplied and increasing burdens which everywhere bore heavily upon the people, he added :

" This must have shown to all, and to military men in particular, the weakness of republics, and the exertions the army had been able to make by being under a proper head. Therefore I little doubt, that, when the benefits of a mixed government are pointed out, and duly considered, such will be readily adopted. In this case it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties, apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory, those qualities, that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace.

" Some people have so connected the ideas of tyranny and monarchy, as to

fear, that the enemy, knowing our delicacy respecting the propriety of retaliating upon a capitulation officer in any case, and being acquainted that unconditional prisoners are within our power, will put an unfavorable construction upon this instance of our conduct. At least, under present circumstances, Captain Asgill's application to Sir Guy Carleton will, I fear, be productive of remonstrance and recrimination only, which may possibly tend to place the subject upon a disadvantageous footing.[1]

find it very difficult to separate them. It may therefore be requisite to give the head of such a constitution, as I propose, some title apparently more moderate; but if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of KING, which I conceive would be attended with some material advantages."

That this hint was well understood by Washington, is evident from the tone of his rebuke, which is stern, direct, and severe, and such as to preclude most effectually any further advances. Nor is it to be presumed, that Colonel Nicola was alone in the scheme thus put forward under the sanction of his name. There was unquestionably at this time, and for some time afterwards, a party in the army, neither small in number, nor insignificant in character, prepared to second and sustain a measure of this kind, which they conceived necessary to strengthen the civil power, draw out the resources of the country, and establish a durable government.—*Sparks.*

[1] "At the drawing of lots, which was done in the presence of Major Gordon and all the British captains within the limits prescribed, the unfortunate lot has fallen on Captain Charles Asgill, of the guards, a young gentleman nineteen years of age; a most amiable character; the only son of Sir Charles Asgill; heir to an extensive fortune and an honorable title; and of course he has great interest in the British court and army. The British officers are highly enraged at the conduct of Sir Henry Clinton; they have solicited my leave to send an officer to New York on this occasion, or that I would intercede with the minister of war to grant it. Being fully convinced, that no inconvenience could possibly arise to our cause from this indulgence, but, on the contrary, that good policy and humanity dictate the measure, I was pleased at the application, and with cheerfulness have recommended to the minister of war to grant the honorable Captain Ludlow, son to the Earl of Ludlow, leave to carry the representations of those unfortunate officers, who openly declare they have been deserted by their general, and given up to suffer for the sins of the guilty."—*Hazen to Washington*, 27 May, 1782.

To remedy, therefore, as soon as possible this mistake, you will be pleased immediately to order, that Lieutenant Turner, the officer you mention to be confined in York gaol, or any other prisoner, who falls within my first description, may be conveyed on to Philadelphia, under the same regulations and directions as were heretofore given, that he may take the place of Captain Asgill. In the meantime, lest any misinformation respecting Mr. Turner may have reached you, which might occasion further mistake and delay, Captain Asgill will be detained until I can learn a certainty of Lieutenant Turner's or some other officer's answering our purpose; and, as their detention will leave the young gentleman now with us in a very disagreeable state of anxiety and suspense, I must desire, that you will be pleased to use every means in your power to make the greatest despatch in the execution of this order.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO COLONEL ELIAS DAYTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 June, 1782.

SIR,

I am just informed by the secretary at war, that Captain Asgill, of the British guards, an unfortunate officer, who is destined to be the unhappy victim to atone for the death of Captain Huddy, had arrived in Philadelphia, and would set off very soon for the Jersey line, the place assigned for his execution. He will probably arrive as soon as this will reach you, and will be attended by Captain Ludlow, his friend,

whom he wishes to be admitted to go into New York, with an address to Sir Guy Carleton on his behalf.

You will therefore give permission to Captain Ludlow to go by the way of Dobbs's Ferry into New York, with such representation as Captain Asgill shall please to make to Sir Guy. At the same time, I wish you to intimate to the gentlemen, that, although I am deeply affected with the unhappy fate, to which Captain Asgill is subjected, yet, that it will be to no purpose for them to make any representation to Sir Guy Carleton, which may serve to draw on a discussion of the present point of retaliation; that, in the stage to which the matter has been suffered to run, all argumentation on the subject is entirely precluded on my part; that my resolutions have been grounded on so mature deliberation, that they must remain unalterably fixed. You will also inform the gentlemen, that, while my duty calls me to make this decisive determination, humanity dictates a tear for the unfortunate offering, and inclines me to say, that I most devoutly wish his life may be saved. This happy event may be attained; but it must be effected by the British Commander-in-chief. He knows the alternative, which will accomplish it; and he knows, that this alternative only can avert the dire extremity from the innocent, and that in this way alone the manes of the murdered Captain Huddy will be best appeased.[1]

[1] In the draft of this letter the following paragraph is struck out: "I wish you also to inform Capta. Asgill, with all the tenderness possible, that no address from him or any of his friends can be admitted from them directly to

In the mean time, while this is doing, I must beg that you will be pleased to treat Captain Asgill with every tender attention and politeness (consistent with his present situation), which his rank, fortune, and connexions, together with his unfortunate state, demand. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

5 June, 1782.

My dear Sir,

Col. Hazen's sending an Officer under the capitulation of York Town for the purpose of retaliation, has distressed me exceedingly—Be so good as to give me your opinion of the propriety of doing this upon Cap: Asgill if we should be driven to it for want of an unconditional prisoner.—

Presuming that this matter has been a subject of much conversation; pray, with your own, let me know the opinions of the most sensible of those with whom you have conversed.

Congress by their Resolve has unanimously approved of my determination to retaliate—the Army have advised it—and the Country look for it—But how far it is justifiable upon an Officer under the faith of a Capitulation, if none other can be had, is the question?

Hazen's sending Captn. Asgill on for this purpose making the matter more distressing, as the whole

me—that I can attend to no application but such as shall be made by the British Commander in chief."

business will have the appearance of a farce, if some person is not sacraficed to the mains of poor Huddy; which will be the case, if an unconditional prisoner can not be found, and Asgill escapes—

I *write to you* in exceeding great haste; but beg your sentiments may be transmitted as soon as possible (by Express) as I may be forced to a decision in the course of a few days. * * *[1]

TO ARCHIBALD CARY.

HEAD QRS., NEWBURG, 15 June, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been honored with your favor of the 25th ulto. enclosing sundry resolutions of your Assembly, respecting the insidious manœuvres of the enemy, who, it is evident, cannot mean well, because they take indirect steps to obtain that, to which a plain

[1] "You will inform me, as early as possible, of the present situation of Captain Asgill, the prisoner destined for retaliation, and what prospect he has of relief from his application to Sir Guy Carleton, which I have been informed he has made through his friend Captain Ludlow. I have heard nothing yet from New York in consequence of this application. His fate will be suspended till I can be informed the decision of Sir Guy; but I am impatient, lest this should be unreasonably delayed. The enemy ought to have learned before this, that my resolutions are not to be trifled with. I am, &c.

"P. S. I am informed that Captain Asgill is at Chatham without guard, and under no constraint. This, if true, is certainly wrong. I wish to have the young gentleman treated with all the tenderness possible, consistent with his present situation; but, until his fate is determined, he must be considered as a close prisoner, and be kept in the greatest security. I request, therefore, that he be sent immediately to the Jersey line, where he is to be kept close prisoner, in perfect security, till further orders."—*Washington to Colonel Dayton*, 11 June, 1782.

road is opened, and every good man is desirous of obtaining upon honorable terms. I thank you, my good Sir, for the resolves, whh. you did me the honr. to enclose. They breathe a proper spirit, and with others of a like kind in the different assemblies will, it is to be hoped, convince the enemy, that it is both their interest and policy to be honest.

I very sincerely condole with you on your late heavy loss, but he that gave has a right to take away, and it is the duty of us all, to submit to his will, altho' we cannot but feel the strokes we sustain.—

I should have been very happy to have seen you while I was in Virginia, if it had been but for a moment—indeed the pleasure must have been momentary—for my hours all the while I was in that State were so occupied by the constant duties of my station that I could devote no part of them to the enjoyment of my friends which was not only mortifying to me, but, probably displeasing to some of them.

It gives me much pleasure to learn from so good authority as your pen, that the Assembly of Virginia is better composed than it has been for several years. Much, I think, may be expected from it; the path we are to tread is certainly a plain one; the object is full in our view, but it will not come to us; we must work our way to it by proper advances, and the means of doing this is men and money. In vain is it to expect, that our aim is to be accomplished by fond wishes for Peace; and equally ungenerous as fruitless will it be for one State to depend upon another to bring this to pass. For if I may be allowed to speak

figuratively, our Assemblies, in Politics, are to be compared to the wheels of a clock in mechanics. The whole, for the general purposes of war, shd. be set in motion by the grt. wheel, (Congress;) and, if all will do their parts, the machine works easy; but a failure in one disorders the whole, and without the large one, (wch. sets ye whole in motn.,) nothg. can be done. It is by the united wisdom and exertions of the whole in Congress, who I presume do justice to all (but if they fail by being disproportionate in the first instance it should in my opinion be sought for and remedied in the second rather than derange the whole business of a Campaign by the delays incident to contention) that we are to depend upon. Without this we are no better than a rope of Sand, and are as easily broken asunder.

I write thus openly and freely to you, my dear Sir, because I pant for retirement, and am persuaded that an end of our warfare is not to be obtained but by vigorous exertions. The subjugation of America, so far at least as to hold it in a dependent state, is of too much importance for Great Britain to yield the palm to us whilst her resources exist, or our inactivity, want of system, or dependence upon other powers or upon one another prevail. I can truly say, that the first wish of my Soul is to return speedily into the bosom of that country, which gave me birth, and, in the sweet enjoyment of domestic happiness and the company of a few friends, to end my days in quiet, when I shall be called from this stage. With great truth and sincerity, I am, &c.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

HEAD QUARTERS, 16 June, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your two favors of the fourth Instant were delivered to me by General Lincoln.—It is an easy matter to perceive by the tenor of one of them you have imbibed an Opinion that the Officers of this Army are captious, and that by attempting to remove one complaint, a Door is opened to others.—I am not much surprized at this—You have probably adopted it from the Representation of Mr. Sands, of whom without doing him injustice, it may be said he is extremely plausible—extremely narrow minded—disingenuous and little abounding in a temper to conciliate the good will of the Army or to adopt any measure for the convenience and accommodation of the Officers.—These traits of Mr. Sands's character are not drawn by a pen under the influence of prejudice, or of one improperly biassed in favor of the Army; they are facts of which I have and can produce proofs, and 'till the happening of which, I, upon the spot, was deceived.

Mr. Sands, Sir, if I have not formed a very erroneous opinion of him, is determined to make all the money he can by the Contracts—Herein I do not blame him,—provided he does it honestly, and with a reciprocal fulfillment of the agreement.—Of a want of the first, I do not accuse him; but his thirst of Gain leads him in my opinion into a mistaken principle of Action.—He is very tenacious of all those parts of the Contracts which point to the convenience and

Emolument of the Contractors, and till very lately was determined to be his own Judge of them, but is regardless of other parts which enjoin certain [stipulations] upon them.—To these causes, and these only is to be ascribed I conceive, the present deplorable state of the Magazines, and the dangerous consequences which may flow from it, our frequent want of daily food, and the little prospect of better supplies, and the inconveniences which the Army experience in the mode of issuing. He cannot I presume charge these neglects to a failure on your part; and sure I am he cannot do it to the scarcity of Provisions, for the Country is surcharged with all kinds of it—But in expectation it is said of reducing the price of salt meat (which unfortunately it seems has risen upon him), he, notwithstanding the contract and repeated calls and the consequences of a failure, has neglected it to this moment. And to avoid the expence, it is moreover added, of Pasturage (for how else is it to be accounted for ?) and perhaps a little diminution in the weight which all Armies, and all Contractors in the world are obliged to submit to, this Army became the sport of and suffered by every accident or delay, which happens to the droves of Beef cattle.

I should not, my Dear Sir, have given you, who I know have business and perplexities enough without the trouble of reading these observations, (after being told that the Secretary at War would inquire into and redress grievances), but from a love of Justice, and a desire that every Man and description of Man, should be known and rewarded or punished

according to their deserts, and because it would seem that your opinion has been founded on the representations of Mr. Sands, who yielding nothing himself, requiring every thing of others, and failing in the most essential parts of his Contract, adopts as is too commonly the case with little minds, the policy of endeavoring to place the adverse party in the wrong, that he may appear in a more favorable point of view himself.

The very thing which you and every body else points out as so easy to do, is not done, and is the principal hardship complained of by the Officers, who think it surprizing that they cannot enjoy a benefit which is essential to themselves and costs the public nothing, because it will give a little trouble to the Contractors.

Those Officers who claim the specific ration as a matter of right could not in justice, and I persuade myself would not in decency, complain if they should be compelled to draw or forfeit them. But the question in my Opinion is, whether they ought to be compelled to draw them (whether they want them or not) and whether (as it costs the public no more to give them the alternative of drawing the specific Ration or its value) it is not reasonable, especially under the deprivation of pay, to gratify them in it, as it is all they have to live upon.

I shall beg your indulgence but a little while longer till I subscribe fully to your observation that, without a Civil list, neither Civil nor Military Men can exist; but I must beg leave to add to it as my own that, if

the Military should disband for want of Pay (while the war continues to rage) a period will very soon be put to the Civil Establishment under our present Constitution—the Civil and Military Men, having a reciprocal dependance upon each other, taxation of the property of one being equal to that of the other, and the wants of both the same, it is worthy of some considerations whether the first is to receive all and the other no part of their pay.

These Sentiments, my dear Morris, are between ourselves, and tho' freely communicated to you are concealed from the Officers of this Army, on whom I am constantly inculcating patience and forbearance; adding that their relief must flow from the Taxes, and that it is incumbent upon all and every of them to impress the necessity of Taxation upon their several Connexions and Friends as the only source of redress, for that you are totally unsupported and cannot work miracles.

As I never say any thing of a Man that I have the smallest scruple of saying *to him*, I would not be understood to mean *by this being between ourselves* that any part of it that effects Mr. Sands should be hid from him. You are perfectly at liberty if you think it necessary to communicate these my Sentiments to him.

I hope some good will result from the deputation of Congress to the several States—Inclosed I send you a Copy of my Letter to them of the 4th of May, and should have done it sooner, if I could have trusted the conveyance without putting the Letter in Cypher. I pray you to make a tender of my best respects, in

which Mrs. Washington joins me most cordially, to Mrs. Morris & Miss Livingston, and to believe that with every sentiment of esteem and Regard I am, &c.

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 17 June, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

When pressed by necessity to adopt a measure, a choice is scarcely left to us. In answer, therefore, to your letter of the 12th instant, I am obliged to observe, that the tardiness of the States will compel us to that, which in my opinion policy forbids.

At this critical moment, inclination would not lead me to consent to disbanding any corps of the army. But if the States cannot, or, what is the same, will not recruit the regiments, which are quotaed nor furnish the supplies which are necessary for their support, we must next consider what kind of troops under the present view of the matter can best be dispensed with; in doing which, I cannot hesitate to declare, that cavalry, in present circumstances and the probable operations of the campaign, will be least useful, and for that reason ought to be the first to be reduced. But how to effect this purpose appears difficult, the corps being very much dispersed, and the sentiments of the officers quite unknown to me. I confess I am at a loss how to point out any particular mode. To make it a matter of arrangement with the officers to determine among themselves who should go out, and who should remain in service, would be a work of time.

To select the best from among the whole, is not only an invidious business, but requires a perfect knowledge of each individual character, a knowledge, which, with a few exceptions, I confess myself unpossessed of. And to retain the corps or officers by seniority may, and I am sure in some instances would, give the most indifferent officers in the whole line of the cavalry. Not being able to hit on any method, which is satisfactory to myself, I submit this point to your decision.

If the regiments of artillery, allotted to the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia, cannot be completed, an event of which I see but little prospect, however inconsistent it may be with policy, and whatever consequence it may involve, I readily subscribe to the opinion of blending the two into one. Nothing surely can be more inconsistent with every principle of economy, than to keep up whole corps of officers for the sake of a few or a handful of men. There cannot, I think, be a doubt of the propriety of reducing Hazen's regiment. The Canadian part of it may be formed into one or more companies according to their number, and be employed as watermen, or in other services suited to their circumstances; the remainder to be turned over to the States to which they respectively belong.

What prospects the States south of the Delaware have of getting their regiments filled, under the several modes adopted by them, I know not; therefore can give no opinion respecting them, but am certain that no regiment of infantry belonging to any State

north of the Delaware ought to be reduced. Most of the staff departments of the army have undergone a recent change. Those, I presume, cannot want a revision. The quartermaster's department has been regulated without any participation of mine, and I know too little of its present constitution to form any judgment upon it. The same is the state of my knowledge respecting the clothier's department. I can only observe to you that, upon an application to me from the assistant clothier here for provisions, it appeared to me, that he had more persons employed under him than I thought necessary, and on that principle I refused to give him an order for his full request.

Thus, Sir, I have given you my sentiments on your queries. If they shall prove of any use in effecting the salutary purposes you wish, I shall think myself happy in contributing in this way to the general weal.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN DICKINSON, PRESIDENT OF DELAWARE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 19 June, 1782.

SIR,

I feel myself much obliged by the friendly communication of your sentiments to me on the subject of retaliation, conveyed under your favor of the 30th May, a subject truly disagreeable and distressing to me. The horrid circumstances of barbarity, which introduced the instance which now gains our particular attention, came to me under the representation

of so respectable a body of citizens, that they could not but gain my notice and interposition; especially from a consideration, that, if it was not taken up in this line, the people, strongly provoked by their feelings, on the occasion would probably have assumed the matter upon their own decision, and brought it to an issue under their own power, which mode of proceeding, if permitted, would have involved circumstances still more lamentable and calamitous.

In taking my resolutions, I also found myself supported by many repeated declarations of Congress on this subject. And, after my resolutions being taken, I had the satisfaction to receive the fullest and most decided approbation of that honorable body in this particular instance. But, under all these circumstances, although I never had a doubt on the general propriety of the measure, yet it was not my intention, could it be avoided, to have taken, as a subject of retaliation, an officer under sanction of capitulation or convention; and my first orders were issued agreeable to that idea; but unfortunately it was reported to me, that no officer of an unconditional description was in our possession, which laid me under a necessity of giving further orders, exceeding my original intentions, in consequence of which the unhappy lot has fallen upon Captain Asgill, a prisoner under the capitulation of Yorktown.

I feel myself exceedingly distressed on this occasion; but, my resolutions having been taken upon the most mature deliberation, supported by the approbation of Congress, and grounded on the general concur-

rence of all the principal officers of the army, who were particularly consulted on the subject, cannot be receded from. Justice to the army and the public, my own honor, and, I think I may venture to say, *universal benevolence*, require them to be carried into full execution. It rests, therefore, with the British commander-in-chief to prevent this unhappy measure taking effect. An application is gone to Sir Guy Carleton from Captain Asgill, begging his interposition to avert his fate. The matter is now in agitation; and I am told that a strict inquiry is making into the conduct of Lippincott, who is charged as being the principal perpetrator of the cruel murder of Captain Huddy. Should this inquiry lead to giving satisfaction, by a compliance with my original demand to Sir Henry Clinton, my feelings will be greatly relieved, and I need not assure you, that I shall receive the highest pleasure from such an event. I am, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TENCH TILGHMAN.

HEAD QRS., NEWBURGH, 9 July, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

'Till your letter of the 28th ulto. arrived (which is the first from you, & the only direct acct. of you, since we parted at Philadelphia, we have had various conjectures about you—some thought you were dead—others that you were married—and all that you had forgot us.—Your letter is not a more evident contradiction of the first and last of these suppositions than it is a tacit confirmation of the second;

and as none can wish you greater success in the prosecution of the Plan you are upon than I do, so believe me sincere, when I request you to take your own time to accomplish it, or any other business you may have on hand—at the same time I must be allowed to add, that you have no friend that wishes more to see you than I do.—

I have been in constant expectation ever since my arrival at this place, of a summons to meet Count Rochambeau at Philadelphia to settle a plan for the ensuing Campaign — The non arrival of the dispatches from his Court has hitherto prevented it—but the absolute necessity (to avoid delay after they do arrive)—has induced me to propose a meeting at all events, that we may settle such hypothetical plans as will facilitate our operations, without waiting an interview after the dispatches shall arrive. I shall know the result of this proposition in the course of a few days, as my dispatches left on the 24th ulto.

We have nothing New in this Quarter—Sir Guy, gives strong assurances of the pacific disposition of His most gracious Majesty—by Land—Sir (that is to be) Digby, gives proofs, if he is deficient in assurances, of His said Excellent Majesty's kind intention of Capturing every thing that swims on the face of the *Waters;* and of his humane design of suffocating all those who are found thereon, in Prison Ships, if they will not engage in his service—This, to an American, whose genious is not susceptable of refined ideas, would appear somewhat inconsistent; but to the expanded mind of a Briton they are perfectly

reconcilable. Whether they are right or wrong, time must determine.

I am just returned from a Visit to our Northern Posts, in which Albany, Schenectady, Saratoga, the ——— and the Fields of Burgoyne were visited[1]—Mrs. Washington who sets out this day for Mount Vernon thanks you for your kind remembrance of her —she wishes you, as I do, as much happiness as you can do yourself.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 9th July, 1782.

SIR,

Having found a moment's leisure to examine, myself, into the situation of affairs on the frontiers of this State, I have lately made a journey up the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers as far as Saratoga and Schenectady.[2] Just before my arrival there, a party of three or four hundred of the enemy, consisting of British, refugees, and savages, had made an incursion down the Mohawk, attacked and captured (after a gallant defence) a small guard of Continental troops, who were stationed at the only remaining mill in the upper settlements, which they also destroyed.

By a deserter from this party we are informed, that the enemy are taking post at Oswego, and are either rebuilding the old, or erecting new fortifications there.

[1] He set out on the 24th June.

[2] Haldimand thought this visit was caused by a suspected movement on the part of Vermont.

Whatever the design of the enemy may be by thus occupying a new post, and extending themselves on the frontier, I consider it my duty to inform Congress thereof, and have for that purpose taken the liberty to forward this by the earliest safe conveyance since my return from the northward.

I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency copies and extracts of sundry letters, which have lately passed between the British commander-in-chief and myself. The subjects contained in them being principally of a civil nature, I must beg leave to submit them to the consideration and direction of Congress. I think it only necessary to remark, that, notwithstanding the plausibility of the terms on which Sir Guy Carleton proposes the exchange of American seamen for British soldiers, in his letter of the 7th instant, it must still be obvious, that it would amount to nearly the same thing to have the prisoners so exchanged employed against our allies in the West Indies, as it would to have them acting against ourselves on the continent.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

NEWBURG, 9 July, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 22d of April, also your two favors of the 19th of May with the returns of the army under your command, have been duly received;

[1] The refusal of General Washington to correspond with Sir Guy Carleton on civil affairs met with the full approbation of Congress.—*Journals*, August 12th.

[2] Read in Congress July 15th, referred to Witherspoon, Madison, and Rutledge.

but, having been in momently expectation, that intelligence would arrive from Europe, or some other event turn up, which might disclose the intentions of the enemy, and give a clue for the final determination of the operations of the campaign, I have delayed for a few days giving you my answer. Notwithstanding I am at this hour as much in the dark as ever, I can defer no longer the pleasure I always experience from indulging myself in a free communication and interchange of sentiments with you. To participate and divide our feelings, hopes, fears, and expectations with a friend, is almost the only source of pleasure and consolation left us, in the present languid and and unpromising state of our affairs.

It gives me infinite satisfaction to find, that, by your prudence and decision, you have put a period to the progress of a dangerous mutiny, and, by your example of patience and firmness, reclaimed the army amidst all their agravated sufferings to that good disposition, which it has been your great merit to preserve in your command through the worst times. Their distresses are truly deplorable; and, while the almost insurmountable difficulty of transporting clothing and the smaller supplies (which, General St. Clair reports, are still detained on the road for want of the means of conveyance) gives me the most sensible pain and anxiety, it but too clearly proves the impracticability of removing by land, under our present prospects of finance, the artillery of siege and immense quantity of stores necessary for a serious operation against Charleston.

The disastrous event of the naval action in the West Indies may, indeed, and probably will now give a total alteration to the complexion of the campaign. This will, in all human probability, operate more than any other circumstance against the evacuation of the southern States; for what would have been a very hazardous line of conduct, and would have exposed the enemy to a fatal blow in case of a naval coöperation on this coast, may now be considered as a rational and prudent measure, on their part. But the mode of defensive war (which the enemy affect to have adopted, in which I would however place but very little confidence), and especially the detachment from Charleston, which must have weakened them considerably, will, I hope, enable you in all events to hold your own ground until the southern and middle States shall have made some efforts for your reinforcement, and until the pecuniary affairs of the continent in general shall be put in a better situation. Some little, I flatter myself, will be done, although I must confess my expectations for the campaign are not very sanguine. I feel with you, my dear friend, all the regret and mortification, that can possibly be conceived, from a consideration that we shall be able to avail ourselves so imperfectly of the weakness and embarrassments of our enemy; while, on the other hand, I think there is reason to apprehend from some late indications the enemy have given, by taking post at Oswego and extending themselves on the frontier, that they mean, availing themselves of our languor and looking forward to the hour of pacification, to

occupy as much territory as they are able to do, before a negotiation shall be entered upon. I wish we may be in a capacity to counteract their designs.

I have given my opinion to Congress through the secretary at war, that it will be advisable to make a permanent incorporation of all the troops southward of the Delaware in the manner you propose; but, as the observations did not apply to the other troops, these regiments ought to remain on their present establishment.

As to the movement and disposition of the French army, I will tell you exactly my idea and plan respecting it, and how the matter now rests. While we continued in the state of uncertainty, which has so long perplexed and prevented us from forming any projects whatever, I wished to have the corps of the Count de Rochambeau remain in a situation equally capable of looking either way, as circumstances might eventually require, being well persuaded in my own mind, that with their assistance (without the aid of a naval force) we should not at this time be able to do anything effectual against New York, defended by its present garrison; and, presuming still greater difficulties would oppose themselves to an attempt against Charleston, I proposed to postpone my final resolution until we should hear from the other side of the Atlantic. For, allowing your army, in conjunction with the French troops, to be completely competent to the object, the transportation by land of heavy artillery stores and apparatus appeared to me an inevitable obstacle, which I have fully explained

in my letter of the 23d of April last. Besides, the diminution of an army in so long a march, and the innumerable advantages the enemy must derive from the command of the water, were considerations with me. And, as I flattered myself we might be able to keep the enemy in check with our present force, both in the northern and southern departments, I therefore thought it expedient, that the select corps of our allies in Virginia should continue unimpaired as a *corps de reserve* in that State, until new information or circumstances should produce new orders from me; unless the Count de Rochambeau should first be apprized of some contingence or event, which should render a movement in his opinion proper; in which case the matter was left to his determination. I have this moment learned from his Excellency, the Minister of France, that the Count has already commenced his march northward. What circumstances have led to this, I am unable to say; but expect to see the Count himself in a few days (by appointment) at Philadelphia, where it is proposed to enter into a discussion of the possible objects and views of the campaign, so far as our general and imperfect knowledge of affairs will admit, and from whence I shall have the pleasure to inform you of any thing of moment, that may in the mean time take place, or ultimately be in contemplation.

Under an idea, that the French troops would certainly be withdrawn from Virginia at some moment of the campaign, and perhaps unexpectedly, I have long since written to Governor Harrison on that subject, and requested that a body of men might be in

readiness for the defence of the State on that occasion. Indeed I have written almost incessantly to all the States, urging, in the most forcible terms I could make use of, the absolute necessity of complying with the requisitions of Congress in furnishing their contingents of men and money, and am unhappy to say the success of these applications have not been equal to my expectation.

I am happy to assure you there was no foundation for the report of my having had a narrow escape in passing the Clove. In return, we have had a similar account respecting yourself, which I hope was equally groundless. Believe me, my dear Sir, I shall always consider myself deeply interested in whatever concerns you, and shall ever rejoice at your health, safety, and felicity.

Mrs. Washington, who is just setting out for Virginia, joins me in most affectionate regards to Mrs. Greene and yourself. I am, dear Sir, with the most perfect esteem, &c.

P. S. Although the campaign does not promise much activity, yet I shall wish you to keep me as regularly and accurately informed of the state of your department as possible, noting the strength, movements, and position of your own army, and that of the enemy. It may also be essential for me to be made acquainted with the resources of the country and every thing of a military or political nature, which may be interesting to our future plans and operations.[1]

[1] According to the proposal of Count de Rochambeau, a conference was held at Philadelphia, respecting the future operations of the campaign. The two commanders met there on the 15th of July. As no instructions had been re-

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN LAURENS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 July, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

The last post brought me your letter of the 19th of May. I must confess, that I am not at all astonished at the failure of your plan. That spirit of freedom, which at the commencement of this contest would have gladly sacrificed every thing to the attainment of its object, has long since subsided, and every selfish passion has taken its place. It is not the public, but private interest, which influences the generality of mankind, nor can the Americans any longer boast an exception. Under these circumstances, it would rather have been surprising if you had succeeded, nor will you I fear succeed better in Georgia.[1]

ceived from the French court, it was not in the power of Count de Rochambeau to give any decided information as to the time a French fleet might be expected on the coast from the West Indies, or its strength when arrived. He had reason to suppose, however, that it would come to the northward; and, as the sickly season was approaching in Virginia, he had put his troops under marching orders about the 1st of July, and expected they would reach Baltimore before the end of the month. It was agreed, therefore, that the French army should remain a few days at Baltimore, till further instructions or intelligence should be received, and that, unless special reasons might appear to the contrary, the army should continue its march northwardly, and join the American forces on the Hudson. This plan was thought advisable, moreover, to prevent Sir Guy Carleton from sending detachments from New York to Jamaica, where they might be turned against the French in the West Indies.

An elaborate memoir, pointing out various plans of a campaign, was presented by General Washington to Count de Rochambeau, who forwarded it to the French court. Immediately after the interview General Washington returned to Newburg, where he arrived on the 27th of July.

[1] The plan here mentioned, which Colonel Laurens was extremely anxious to carry into effect, was to raise a regiment of black levies in South Carolina. He brought the subject before the legislature of the State, and pursued it with all his zeal and influence, but the measure was not approved. "It was some consolation, however," said he, "to perceive that truth and philosophy had

In the present moment, there is very little prospect of the campaign being much more active in this quarter than in yours. However, little can be positively determined on, till we have some advices from Europe, which I am anxiously waiting for. When they arrive, I shall be better able to tell you what we may expect.

Sir Guy Carleton is using every art to soothe and lull our people into a state of security. Adml. Digby is capturing all our vessels, and suffocating all our Seamen who will not enlist into the Service of His Britannic Majesty, as fast as possible in Prison Ships; and Haldimand, (with his savage allies,) is scalping and burning the Frontiers. Such is the line of conduct pursued by the different commanders, and such their politics. You have my best wishes, being always sincerely yours.

TO JAMES McHENRY.

PHILA., 18 July, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mr. Lindsay handed me your favor of the 14th. The disposition of the Prisoners is not with me, but I have accompanied your request to the Secretary at War, and have no doubt of his acquiescence. If the Ladies should derive as much additional pleasure from the allurement of this Band, as I wish them, they will soon be at the summit of happiness.

gained some ground, the suffrages in favor of the measure being twice as numerous as on a former occasion. Some hopes have been lately given me from Georgia; but I fear, when the question is put, we shall be outvoted there with as much disparity as we have been in this country."—*Bacon's Bridge, South Carolina*, May 19th.

At present we are enveloped in darkness; and no man, I believe, can foretell all the consequences which will result from the naval Action in the West Indies —to say no worse of it, it is an unfortunate affair— & if the States cannot, or will not rouse to more vigorous exertions, they must submit to the consequences. Providence has done much for us in this contest, but we must do something for ourselves, if we expect to go triumphantly through with it.

My coming to this place was sudden as unexpected —Mrs. Washington left Head Qrs. on Tuesday.—On Thursday I rec'd a letter from Count De Rochambeau by one of his aids, which induced me to set off on Friday, and I arrived on Sunday; so that my being at the Minister's celebration of the birth of the Dauphin, was purely accidental.[1] I heard with concern by Colo. Rogers of your indisposition, but rejoice at your recovery.—As your fever has been obstinate may not change of air be of service to you—whether for this, or other purposes, allow me to add that I should be very happy in your spending some time with us at Head Quarters. In a letter which I have lately received from the Marqs. De la Fayette he desired to be particularly remembered to you.—I am with much truth, &c.

P. S. Since writing the foregoing, I am informed by one of my Aids who I sent with Mr. Lindsay to the Secretary at War, that certain plans have been

[1] Dr. Rush gave a full account of this celebration in a letter dated 16 July, 1782, printed in the *Portfolio* of 1817, and again in the *Magazine of American History*, 1877, p. 506.

adopted by him, and sanctioned, that will prevent Mr. Lindsay getting the Music in the manner he at first proposed—but on terms which he (Lindsay) will readily accede to if the prisoners can be engaged to yield their acquiescence.

Since writing the above I have received your Letter respecting the Interview which Majr. Lynch reqs. with persons at New York. Please to inform that Gentleman that it is a rule Established by me (and I think by Congress) for all Citizens, to bring certificates from the Executive of the State in wch. they reside that they are permitted to their indulgence—it is then no more than an act of official duty with me—Let Mr. Lynch bring this to Head Qrs. at Newburgh, & I will order the officer commanding on the Lines, to furnish him with a Flag.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
6 August, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

In my last letter, of the 9th of July in which I acknowledged your several favors of the 22d of April and 19th of May, I mentioned my expectation of soon meeting the Count de Rochambeau in Philadelphia, and my intention of writing you from that place, in case any thing of moment should turn up in the mean while; but as our hopes, that public despatches would have arrived from France before our meeting, have been disappointed, I can only inform you, that mat-

ters now rest in the same situation as described in my former letters, except with regard to the negotiations, which are said to be carrying on by the belligerent powers in Europe.

Indeed, I hardly know what to think or believe of the disposition of the court of Britain. Certain it is, the new administration have made overtures of peace to the several nations at war, apparently with a design to detach some one or another of them from the general combination; but, not having succeeded in their efforts for a separate negotiation, how far the necessity of affairs may carry them in their wishes for a general pacification upon admissible terms, I cannot undertake to determine. From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy, I confess I am induced to doubt every thing, to suspect every thing; otherwise I should suppose, from the subsequent extract of a letter from Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby to me, dated the 2d instant, that the prospects of, and negotiation for, a general peace would be very favorable.[1]

[1] In sending the same extract to Doctor McHenry, Washington wrote:

"Here then, if these expressions are not Intrenched in General Conway's speech (when he threw out an Idea of giving to America the same *kind* of Independency that they were about granting to Ireland) is a solid basis for our Commissioners to raise their superstructure upon; and things may, & probably soon will be brought to a speedy and happy Issue.—But, if the Ministry mean no more than Genl. Conway has hinted at, 't is plain their only aim is to gain time, that they may become more formidable at Sea—form new Alliances, if possible —or disunite us.—Be their object what it may, we, if wise, should push our preparations with vigor; for nothing will hasten Peace, more, than to be in a Condition for War, and if the contest is to continue, 't is indispensably necessary.

"One thing however is certain, but how it came to pass is not very well understood; and that is, that the Letter of Carleton & Digby to me, has been published in New York, and has spread universal consternation among all the

"We are acquainted, Sir, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all parties at war, and is now at Paris in the execution of his commission. And we are likewise, Sir, further made acquainted, that his Majesty, in order to remove all obstacles to that peace, which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the independency of the thirteen provinces should be proposed by him, in the first instance, instead of making it a condition, of a general treaty; however, not without the highest confidence, that the loyalists shall be restored to their possessions, or a full compensation made them for whatever confiscations may have taken place."

These communications, they say, had just arrived by a packet. They further add, that Mr. Laurens was enlarged from all engagements,[1] and that transports were prepared for conveying all American prisoners to this country to be exchanged here. Whatever the real intention of the enemy may be, I think the strictest attention and exertion, which have ever been practised on our part, instead of being diminished, ought to be increased thereby. Jealousy and precaution, at least, can do no harm. Too much confidence and supineness may be pernicious in the extreme.

Tribes of Refugees;—who, actuated by different Passions—or the same passion in different degrees & forms & are a mere medley of confused-enraged & dejected characters.—Some it is said are cursing—others crying—while far the greatest part of them are struck dumb, and do not know what to do."—*Washington to James McHenry*, 15 August, 1782.

[1] Congress had directed Washington to "remand immediately Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis to the United States, unless the Honorable Henry Laurens be forthwith released from his captivity, and furnished with passports to any part of Europe or America, at his option, or be admitted to a general parole." Sir Guy Carleton replied that Laurens had been for some time in perfect freedom, and had considered Cornwallis as exchanged.

There having been a vague report, that a small embarkation of cavalry and infantry was to take place at New York, to relieve part of the garrison of Charleston, I have made use of this occasion to desire the secretary at war to put Armand's legion immediately in motion to join you, and have requested he will use his endeavors to have the means afforded to facilitate and expedite the movement.

A mail has lately been intercepted by the enemy between Philadelphia and Trenton, in which, I am informed, there were letters from you to me. These by the time of their capture were probably of the same date as your despatches to Congress, wherein the correspondence between General Leslie and yourself was enclosed. I mention these circumstances, that you may forward duplicates in case you should judge it necessary.

You will, I imagine, have heard, before this reaches you, of the arrival of M. Vaudreuil with a fleet of thirteen ships of the line on this coast. I can give you no particulars, as I have no official account of his arrival. The army of the Count de Rochambeau, having, as I advised you in my last, marched towards the northward, at our meeting in Philadelphia, (it was concluded) upon a consideration of all circumstances, that this corps should proceed to join the army on the Hudson. They were at Baltimore by the last intelligence from that quarter.

Since the receipt of the letter from the commissioners, Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby, I have seen a New York paper of the 3d instant, in which

is a speech of General Conway, and some other articles, which appear to be designed to propose independence to America on certain conditions not admissible, namely, that the legislature of America should be totally independent of the Parliament of Great Britain, but that the King of England should have the same kind of supremacy here as in Ireland. I have not information sufficient to determine, whether this is the kind of independence alluded to in the letter of the commissioners, or not. I wish my suspicions, however, may be ill-founded. Wishing you all the success and happiness you can desire, I am, my dear Sir, with the highest sentiments of regard and esteem, &c.[1]

TO JOHN P. POSEY.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURGH,
7 August, 1782.

SIR,

With a mixture of surprize, concern, and even horror, have I heard of your treatment of the deceased Mr. Custis; in the abuse in misapplication of the estate which he had committed—with much confidence I am sure, and I believe personal regard—to your management.

[1] "As a result of this conference [at Philadelphia], I was sent on the 19th [of July] to York, in Virginia, on a mission then secret but no longer so; this was to embark, as soon as possible, our siege artillery, which we had left at West Point, 8 leagues above York on the same river, and move it up the Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore. . . . The army is to leave Baltimore the 15th, to pass here [Philadelphia] and to march to the North River."—*Fersen to his Father*, 8 August, 1782. The army did not begin to move until the 20th.

If what I have heard, or the half of it be true, you must not only be lost to the feelings of virtue, honor, and common honesty—but you must have suffered an unwarrantable thirst of gain to lead you into errors which are so pregrant with folly and indiscretion, as to render you a mark for every man's arrow to level at. Can you suppose, Sir, that a manager can dissipate his Employer's Estate with impunity? That there are not Laws in every free country by which Justice is to be obtained?—or that the Heirs of Mr. Custis will not find friends who will pursue you to the end of the Earth in order to come at it? If you do, you are proceeding upon exceedingly mistaken principles—but, for a moment only, let us suppose that you have taken the advantage of an unsuspecting friend—for such I am sure Mr. Custis was *to you*, and that you have acted so covertly, as to elude the Law; do you believe that in the hours of cool reflection—in the moment perhaps, when you shall find that ill-gotten pelf can no longer avail you; that your conscience will not smite you for such complicated iniquity as arises not only from acts of injustice, but the horrors of ingratitude; in abusing the confidence of a man who supposed you incapable of deceiving him, who was willing, and I believe did, in a great degree, commit his whole property to your care?

But this by the by—I do not mean to put this matter upon the footing of conscience. Conscience might have been kicked out of doors before you could have proceeded to the length of selling another man's negroes for your own emolument, and this too after

having applyed the greatest part, or the whole of the profits of his Estate to your benefit.—Conscience again seldom comes to a man's aid while he is in the zenith of health, and revelling in pomp and luxury upon illgotten spoils. It is generally the *last* act of his life, and comes too late to be of much service to others here, or to himself hereafter. But, Sir, the footing I expect to see you put this matter upon is, to settle without delay, such acc'ts with the administrator of Mr. Custis's Estate, whose duty it is to have it done, as you can support by authentic vouchers—That you will show by what authority you have sold any of his negroes, and to what purposes the money has been applied—and lastly, what crops you have made, what stocks you have raised, and how they have been disposed of. A settlement of this kind, altho' it should appear by it that you have applied the greatest part, or even the whole of the money arising from the sales of them, to your own purposes, will be the next best thing to never having committed the wrong. How far Mr. Dandridge, as an Administrator, may chuse to push matters, I cannot undertake (never having heard from him on the subject) to say—but this you may *rely on*, that this affair shall be most critically investigated, and probed to the bottom; let the trouble and cost of doing it be what it may—as a man therefore who wishes for your own sake as well as that of an injured family, to see you act properly, I advise, and warn you of the consequences of a contrary conduct, being, Sir, yr. most h'ble Serv't.

TO THE MARQUIS DE VAUDREUIL.

HEAD QUARTERS, 10 August, 1782.

SIR,

I have the Honor to address you, at the particular Request, in Consequence of a Letter which I have just received from his Excelly. the Count de Rochambeau, inclosing to me the copy of a correspondence between him and you, relative to the Operations of the Fleet under your Command on the Coasts of N. America; wherein you mention to him a Wish, that while your Fleet should remain in the Neighborhood of Boston, you might be enabled to make a stroke at the Enemy's post of Penobscot; and in the Discussion of which point, the Count de Rochambeau has referred you to my Opinion upon that Enterprise.

While I applaud, Sir, the generous Disposition declared in your Intentions for our Assistance, Candor requires me to be very explicit upon the subject—I am obliged therefore to say that it is my decided Opinion that, considering the Hazards that will attend the Enterprise, the Object is by no means equal to the Risque that will attend the attempt.

Among many Reasons which influence my Mind in forming this Opinion, the great and very principal One, appears from your own Letter to Count de Rochambeau, where you mention to him, that you expect immediately to be followed into these Seas, by a superior British fleet. Admitting this Event to take place, and that your fleet should have proceeded to Penobscot (which is near One hundred Leagues from Boston, the only secure Harbor which you will find

upon all those Eastern shores, and lies almost at the Bottom of a deep Bay,) it appears to me that your Fleet will be placed in the greatest Hazard of being totally destroyed. For in that Situation they will be compleatly imbayed, and a brisk S. Westerly Wind, which will be most favorable for the British fleet from N. York—and which would bring them into the Bay in a short Time, would be directly opposed to your Escape. So that was you to receive the earliest Intelligence of the Enemy's fleet leaving N. York, under such Circumstances, yet you could not avail yourself of the Information, and at the same time would be placed in a position where no Harbor or fortification could give you any protection or shelter.

Was this Argument of Danger to his Most Christian Majesty's Ships not sufficient to govern your mind, I could mention that the Time that must be employed on this attempt will probably be much greater than you seem to apprehend. A month is as short as I should estimate, taking together all the necessary preparations and little cross events that must probably interpose. For I have not an Idea of the object being to be attained by a Coup de main, as I am lately informed by good Intelligence that the Fort is the most regularly constructed and best finished of any in America, is well situated, and garrisoned by the 74th Regiment, consisting of 800 Men, which will require a Regular Seige, to be conducted by cautious Approaches, with a considerable Addition of Men to the Number of Troops which are on Board your Fleet; with their necessary Cannon and

Mortars, Stores, &c., the whole of which in all probability, was the Seige to be undertaken, and your fleet obliged to make a sudden departure, must all be sacrificed ; as their Retreat by Land, (as has been heretofore experienced) would be almost totally impossible and impracticable, to be effected thro' a Country which is as yet a mere Wilderness of large Extent and difficult passage.

Even supposing the best, that the Attempt should succeed and the object be gained, I am much in doubt, whether, without a superior naval force to be maintained on these Coasts we should be able to retain the post, as it would ever be subject to a renewed Attempt from the Enemy in Case we should keep up a Garrison there : or in Case of Evacuation, they might at any Time repossess the post, and continue the same Annoyance, that they now give up.

Under these Considerations (without giving you any further Trouble) it is my Decided Opinion that the Object in contemplation is not of Importance, sufficient to justify the Hazzards and Risques which must probably be encountered in the Attempt to obtain it.

While I offer you this Opinion, Sir, I beg you will esteem it as coming from a Heart not only candid in its Sentiments, but at the same Time penetrated with a Sense of the Highest Gratitude to you for the noble Offer of your Assistance, which, it is our misfortune, that under present Circumstances, we are not able to avail ourselves of.

After giving you the foregoing Opinion upon present Appearances, I have only to add that in Case

Circumstances should turn up so differently to our present Ideas, that you should, with the Advice of Genl. de Choisy think the attempt practicable, I can only refer you to the State of Massa. for such aid in Men, Cannon, Mortars, & Stores, as you shall judge necessary, it being the only practicable mode in which I can coöperate with your designs—and this Recommendation shall be most cheerfully given.

The Chevalier de la Luzerne has requested me to establish a regular Chain of Communication between my Head Quarters and Boston, for the purpose of giving you the earliest Intelligence of every minute Circumstance that may occur respecting the Arrival or Operations of the British fleet at N. York, and for the purpose of free Intercourse with you on any other Circumstance that may turn up. You may depend, Sir, that this Establishment shall be immediately formed, and that every Service I can possibly render you in this or in any other Way in my power shall be most cheerfully afforded.

With the purest sentiments of Respect and Esteem, I have, &c.[1]

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHASTELLUX.

[EXTRACT.]

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
10 August, 1782.

My time, during my winter's residence in Philadelphia, was unusually (for me) divided between parties of pleasure and parties of business. The first,—

[1] Count Rochambeau did not approve of the plan, and the project was abandoned.

nearly all of a sameness, at all times and places in this infant country—is easily conceived; at least is too unimportant for description. The second, was only diversified by perplexities, and could afford no entertainment. * * * My time, since I joined the army in this quarter, has been occupied principally in providing for disciplining and preparing the troops for the Field. Cramped as we have been, and now are for want of money, every thing moves slowly; but as this is no new case, I am not discouraged by it.

The enemy talk loudly, and very confidently of Peace—but whether they are in earnest, or whether it is to amuse and while away the time till they can prepare for a more vigorous prosecution of the war, time will evince. Certain it is, the refugees at New York are violently convulsed by a letter which, ere this, you will have seen published, from Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby to me, upon the subject of a general pacification and acknowledgement of the Independency of this Country.

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

NEWBURG, 11 August, 1782.

SIR,

Having been informed that Major-General Gates is in Philadelphia, and being now about to make my ultimate arrangements for the campaign, I take the liberty to request, that you will be pleased to inform me by the earliest conveyance whether he wishes to be employed in this army or not. As it is now in my

power to give General Gates a command suitable to his rank, and as I have not heard from him since I wrote to him on the 18th of March last, I trouble you with this request, that I may be still made acquainted with his determination before the disposition of commands is finally concluded. * * * I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
16 August, 1782.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 13th by Mr. Lauberdiere who made so much despatch that he delivered it last night about 11 o'clock.

Were we certain, that a pacification had advanced so far as your Excellency thinks it has, or could we

[1] This notice was conveyed to General Gates, who answered: "General Lincoln has acquainted me, that it is your Excellency s desire to know, if I wish to take command in the army this campaign. I beg your Excellency to believe, that I am always ready to obey your commands, and shall be most happy when I can execute them to your satisfaction. I have but to entreat, that no attention to me or my rank may interfere or break in upon any part of your arrangments. My zeal for the public interest makes me exceedingly anxious to be present at the great concluding stroke of this war."—*MS. Letter*, Philadelphia, August 17th.

Since the unfortunate battle of Camden, General Gates had been in retirement at his seat in Virginia. The court of inquiry, ordered by Congress to examine into that matter, had never been convened. The subject was at length brought forward anew, and it was resolved, "That the resolution of the 5th of October, 1780, directing a court of inquiry on the conduct of Major-General Gates be repealed; and that he take command in the army as the Commander-in-chief shall direct."—*Journals*, August 14th. This resolution passed with only three dissenting voices. He rejoined the army on the 5th of October, and took command of the right wing as senior officer.

be assured that the British ministry were really sincere in their offers, which have been communicated through their Commander-in-chief, Sir Guy Carleton, I should think your Excellency might, without any inconvenience or danger, await the orders of your court where you now are,[1] and dismiss all your wagons. But when we consider, that negotiations are sometimes set on foot merely to gain time, that there are yet no offers on the part of the enemy for a general cessation of hostilities, and that, although their commanders in this country are in a manner tied down by the resolves of their House of Commons to a defensive war only, yet they may be at liberty to transport part of their force to the West Indies, I think it highly necessary, for the good of the common cause, and especially to prevent the measure, which I have last mentioned, to unite our force upon the North River; and in this opinion I am confirmed by the sentiments contained in a letter from the minister of France to the Marquis de Vaudreuil, which he has been good enough to leave open for my inspection.

"From the different accounts I can collect, it seems to be the design of England to make a general peace; but the demands on one side and the other will render a conclusion extremely difficult; and in that case that power will spare nothing to effectuate a peace with the United States, and turn all their efforts against us. As to a separate peace with the United States it will not take place. I am certain they

[1] At Baltimore.

will not make peace but in concert with us." The minister also says to me; "You will judge better than us, if it is proper to march the French army or not. It is certain, that it will be necessary, if the English show any disposition to detach any considerable force to the West Indies." What are the intentions of the enemy in this respect, it is impossible for me precisely to determine. Accounts out of New York, but not on very good authority, still continue to mention an embarkation to the West Indies. The garrison of Savannah has arrived at New York, and there are some grounds for believing that Charleston will be evacuated. Should that event take place, and the garrison come to New York also, they might without danger detach considerably, should our force continue divided.

Upon the whole, Sir, I hardly imagine you will think it prudent to dismiss your carriages under present appearances and circumstances; and, if you do not, the cattle will be as easily and cheaply subsisted upon a march as in a settled camp. Should an accommodation take place, and should the orders of your court call you from the continent, your embarkation might be as easily made upon the Delaware or the Hudson, as upon the Chesapeake. From the foregoing therefore, I am of opinion, that no good consequences can result from your remaining at Baltimore, but that many advantages may attend your marching forward, and forming a junction with this army. Actuated by no motives, but those which tend to the general good, I have taken the liberty of giving your

Excellency my sentiments with that freedom, with which I am convinced you would ever wish me to deliver them. I beg leave to return your Excellency my thanks for the attention you have paid, not only to the exchange of Colonel Laumoy, but of several others of our officers.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 18 August, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your private letter of the 12th instant. I cannot but think the conduct of [Congress], respecting the release of Lord Cornwallis very extraordinary. Is it reasonable that Mr. Laurens should be at full liberty, and acting as a commissioner in Europe, while Lord Cornwallis, for whose liberation he pledged his own honor, and consequently as a public man the honor of the States, is held bound by his parole? Either disavow the propriety of Mr. Laurens's conduct, and let him be remanded by the British ministry, or set Lord Cornwallis at equal liberty. I am placed in a very delicate situation. Sir Guy Carleton has given me official information of the transaction, and has called for a confirmation of Mr. Laurens's act. I have referred the matter to the proper place, and I can obtain no answer. In my letters to General Carleton I am obliged to be for the present silent, but I certainly must expect to hear from him again. Do, my

good Sir, endeavor to obtain a decision upon this matter.[1]

Your public letter of the 12th covers a resolve of the same date, authorizing me to propose a meeting of commissioners for establishing a cartel, &c. Here again I am somewhat embarrassed, never having yet received either the approbation or disapprobation of Congress upon the proceedings of the former commissioners, General Knox and Mr. Gouverneur Morris, although they were transmitted so long ago as the 30th of April last. It appears by the report of those gentlemen, that the negotiation was principally broken off on account of the disposition, which plainly appeared on the part of the British commissioners to procure the exchange of their soldiers in our hands without settlement of accounts, making any payment, or giving

[1] The letter from Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby to General Washington was referred by Congress to a committee, who, on the part relating to Mr. Laurens, "proposed and reported, that the General should he directed to empower his commissioners [for negotiating a cartel] to release Earl Cornwallis from his parole in return for the indulgence granted to Mr. Laurens; but Mr. Rutledge, one of the committee, inveighed against this with so much warmth and indignation, that it was rejected with a loud and general *No* from all parts of the House. Nothing was said on the proposition of exchanging soldiers for seamen. Congress deemed it inexpedient to touch upon that matter at present, or to do any thing that might serve as a pretext for refusing to settle a cartel; and apprehended, if a general cartel was established, provision might be made therein for a release of our seamen, as well as for preventing the capture of unarmed citizens."—*Charles Thomson's MS. Sketch of the Debate in Congress*, August 12th.

At the solicitation of Mr. Laurens after he was set at liberty, and after the return of Lord Cornwallis to England, Dr. Franklin sent to the latter a paper discharging him from his parole, but reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of the act. In consequence of this form of release, Lord Cornwallis considered himself at liberty, and took his seat in the House of Peers.—*Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. iii., pp, 362, 373.

any security for the payment of the large sum which, we conceive, is due. Now Congress, in the resolve to which I have just referred, make no reference to any former transaction, but authorize me to settle a cartel, "taking care that the liquidation of accounts and settlement of the balance due for the maintenance of prisoners be provided for therein." From this it may possibly be said, it may be inferred, that they do approve the former proceedings, and mean to make the settlement of accounts a preliminary; but this is an inference only, and may be a false one; and therefore I wish you would be good enough to endeavor to find out the true meaning of the House, and to procure a determination upon the former proceedings.

The same commissioners will probably be appointed upon our part, and, could they be assured their former principles were thought good, they would proceed with more confidence upon a future occasion. I confess to you, I have found so many difficulties thrown in the way of all former transactions of this nature, that I could ever wish Congress to be as full and explicit as possible, as to the points which they would have either conceded or demanded. I would

[1] On the 28th Washington applied direct to Congress for a determination of the following points, before he could carry the resolution of the 12th into effect: "Whether I am to confirm the exchange of Lord Cornwallis for the Hon'ble Mr. Laurens; and whether it is their intention, that the proposal contained in the letter of Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby, of the 2d of August, "to exchange soldiers for sailors," on the conditions mentioned by those gentlemen, should be acceded to. The last, should we be fortunate enough to obtain a liquidation of accounts (and we must go prepared to suppose that we shall be able to effect it), will be the great point in controversy; and, as it is one of the vast political importance, I wish to be explicitly instructed by Congress upon it."—See *Journals of Congress*, 9 September, 1782.

prefer that mode on many accounts, as you may easily conceive, to unlimited powers. But what I principally now want to be assured of is, whether they do or do not approve the conduct of the former commissioners, and the principles which they seemed desirous of establishing. With much truth and affection, I am, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
19 August, 1782.

SIR,

Congress have been already furnished with copies of all letters, which had passed between the commanders-in-chief of the British forces in New York and myself, respecting the murder of Captain Huddy previous to the last of July. I have now the honor to enclose Sir Guy Carleton's letter of the 1st instant, (in reply to mine of the 25th [30th ?] ultimo,)[2]

[1] "What can Induce Congress to restrain the Issues of the full Number of Rations to any Officer in the Army, which his Rank entitles him to?—when if they mean fair, it is to the public a mere matter of moonshine, whether the Financier pays the Value of them to that Officer if he does not draw them—or to the Contractor if he does?

"Can these things fail to irritate—and irritating, are they not pregnant with mischief? Is it policy—is it Justice to keep a sore constantly gangreened, when no good End is, or possibly can be answered by it? Should men, who have indured more, & received less of their pay than any other Class of people in public Service, have so little Consideration or Attention paid to their Interests or Comforts?

"Would to God, false policy, Inattention or something else, may not be productive of disagreement which will prove irreconcilable."—*Washington to the Secretary at War*, 21 August, 1782.

[2] Washington, on the 25th, named Heath and two aids to meet a British officer of equal rank at Phillips House, on August 5th, to receive the proceed-

and that of the 13th, which accompanied the proceedings of the general court-martial for the trial of Captain Lippincott. The proceedings, together with such other documents as relate to that unfortunate transaction, I also transmit by this opportunity.

As Sir Guy Carleton, notwithstanding the acquittal of Lippincott, reprobates the measure in unequivocal terms, and has given assurances of prosecuting a further inquiry, it has changed the ground I was proceeding upon, and placed the matter upon an extremely delicate footing.

It would be assuming in me to ascribe causes to actions different from those, which are ostensibly and plausibly assigned; but, admitting that General Carleton has no other object but to procrastinate, he has, by disavowing the act, by declaring that it is held in abhorrence, by not even sanctioning the motives, which appear to have influenced Lippincott to become the executioner of Huddy, and by giving the strongest assurances that further inquisition shall be made, so far manifested the appearance of an earnest desire to bring the guilty to punishment, that I fear an act of retaliation upon an innocent person before the result of his inquisition is known, would be considered by the impartial and unprejudiced world in an unfavorable and perhaps unjustifiable

ings of the court-martial on Captain Lippincott. Sir Guy Carleton, however, wished to send with the papers Chief-Justice Frederick Smith to make additional explanations, and Attorney-General Kempe to "enter into such explanations as might tend to remove all reciprocal complaints in the province of New Jersey." Washington very properly declined to complicate what was merely a military question, with another that belonged to the civil government.

point of view; more especially as the great end proposed by retaliation, which is to prevent a repetition of injuries, has been in a manner answered. For, you will please to observe, by the extract of General Clinton's letter of the 26th of April to Governor Franklin,[1] that he had expressly forbidden the Board of Directors to remove or exchange in future any prisoners of war in the custody of their commissary without having first obtained his approbation and orders.

The same reasons, which induced me to lay the first steps I took in this affair before Congress, urge me to submit it to them at its present stage. It is a great national concern, upon which an individual ought not to decide. I shall be glad to be favored with the determination of Congress as early as possible, as I shall suspend giving any answer to Sir Guy Carleton, until I am informed how far they are satisfied with his conduct hitherto.

I cannot close this letter without making a remark upon that part of Sir Guy's, in which he charges me with want of humanity in selecting a victim from among the British officers so early as I did. He ought to consider, that, by the usage of war and upon the principles of retaliation, I should have been justified in executing an officer of equal rank with Captain Huddy immediately upon receiving proofs of his murder, and then informing Sir Henry Clinton that I had done so. Besides, it was impossible for

[1] President of the Board of Directors of the Associated Loyalists, and immediately responsible for the hanging of Huddy.

me to have foreseen, that it would be so very long before the matter would be brought to some kind of issue. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You are hereby appointed to the command of West Point and its dependencies. But, as the army will lie for some time upon Verplanck's Point, you will consider yourself as relieved till further orders from the care of attending to that post, Stony Point, and Dobbs's Ferry, which are part of the dependencies, except so far as relates to their being constantly supplied with the proper quantity of ordnance. I have so thorough a confidence in you, and so well am I acquainted with your ability and activity, that I think it needless to point out to you the great outlines of your duty. I recommend the following matters to your attention.

To visit the redoubts frequently; to see that they are kept in proper order; that the garrisons allotted to them are alert, and that they make it an invariable rule to sleep within the works. They should each be furnished constantly with ten days' wood and water; and, if the contractors keep up such a magazine of salt provision upon the Point, as they ought to do by contract, the detached works should be provided with ten days' provision also. The rolls to be frequently called. No officer to be absent without your leave, and no non-commissioned officer or soldier without the leave of a field-officer.

The quarter-master having reported a scarcity of tents, you will be pleased to remove the tenth Massachussets regiment into the barracks, that their tents may be delivered up. No buildings, either public or private, are to be erected without your knowledge; and, when applications are made to you for that purpose,

[1] Read in Congress August 26th. Referred to Rutledge, McKean, and Duane. October 15th, Witherspoon and Wright were added.

you will, if they are admitted, direct the commanding engineer to point out the situations, that they may not interfere with the defences of the place. The public buildings now carrying on, and the alterations and repairs of the works, will engage your particular attention. You know the necessity of bringing them to a certain state before the frost sets in. Given at Head-Quarters, at Newburg, the 29th of August, 1782.[1]

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VERPLANCK'S POINT,
1 September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

* * * * * *

The late New York papers announce the evacuation of Charleston, as a matter which would certainly take place soon after the 7th of August. I have, upon this information, written to Major-General Smallwood and Colonel Butler to send forward to this army the recruits of Maryland and Pennsylvania, which are at Annapolis and Carlisle. I enclose the letters under flying seals to you, that you may take the sense of Congress upon the matter, before the orders are carried into execution.

Congress having determined what troops should compose the southern army, I do not think myself absolutely at liberty to withdraw those, which are

[1] The army moved from Newburg, on the 31st of August, to Verplanck's Point, where an encampment was established. This change was in consequence of an agreement with Count de Rochambeau to form a junction of the American and French armies at that place, and also to be nearer to the enemy in case any hostile attempts should be made from New York; although, from the inactivity and pacific declarations of Sir Guy Carleton, such attempts were not anticipated.

already there, or to stop the reinforcements intended for them, without first consulting Congress, and which I mean to do through you. So long ago as the 18th of March last, I calculated from appearances upon the evacuation of the southern States; and I then wrote to General Greene to hold himself in readiness to march to the northward the moment such an event should seem certain. In my idea, the infantry apportioned to the two Carolinas and Georgia will be sufficient to be left in the southern quarter. The South Carolina regiment of artillery having been reformed, it may be thought necessary to leave the small remains of Harrison's and late Proctor's there. It will be necessary, also, to consider what corps of horse shall remain. If Armand's legion have not yet moved from Charlottesville, they certainly ought not to proceed. After having consulted Congress, and made the proper arrangements, you will be good enough to inform Major-General Greene of the result, that he may govern himself accordingly. The difficulty and enormous expense of supporting troops to the southward are sufficient inducements to draw off as many from thence as we possibly can.

The whole army, the garrison at West Point excepted, which is left under the command of Major-General Knox, moved down to this ground yesterday. I have sent Major-General Lord Stirling to Albany, to take the command of the two Continental regiments and the State troops upon the northern frontiers. The New York and Jersey lines have

joined me here. I have received yours of the 20th ultimo, enclosing a list of the passengers wanting to go to South Carolina. I shall make the necessary application to Sir Guy Carleton. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 8 September, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to reply to your Excellency's letter of the 23d of August, and to inform you, that Major-Generals Heath and Knox are nominated by me to meet Lieutenant-General Campbell and Mr. Elliot, as commissioners for the purpose of settling a general cartel for an exchange of prisoners. I propose, Sir, that the meeting be held at Tappan, as an intermediate and convenient place, and that it commence on the 18th day of this month, at which time my commissioners will attend, and will be accompanied by the commissary of prisoners.[1] Your Excellency's favor of the 29th, enclosing a copy of Governor Livingston's letter to you of the 10th, came in due time to my hands. I am at a loss to discover for what purpose it was communicated to me; especially as I have more than once observed to you, that in matters of civil resort I have ever avoided any the least interference, and have transmitted to you the

[1] The commissioners met at Tappan on the 25th of September, but effected nothing. The powers of the British commissioners were not satisfactory to the other party, and they separated without commencing a negotiation.—*Heath's Memoirs*, p. 354.

approbation of the sovereign power of these United States for my so doing. And of this nature appears to be the case of Ezekiel Tilton, who is the subject of your correspondence with the Governor.

I cannot help remarking, that your Excellency has several times lately taken occasion to mention, that "all hostilities stand suspended on your part." I must confess, that, to me, this expression wants explanation. I can have no conception of a suspension of hostilities, but that which arises from a mutual agreement of the powers at war, and which extends to naval as well as land operations. That your Excellency has thought proper, on your part, to make a partial suspension, may be admitted; but, whether this has been owing to political or other motives, is not for me to decide. It is, however, a well known fact, that at the same time the British cruisers on our coasts have been more than usually alert; and, while Americans are admitted to understand their real interests, it will be difficult for them, when a suspension of hostilities is spoken of, to separate the idea of its extending to the sea as well as land.

I cannot ascribe the inroads of the savages upon our northwestern frontier to the causes, from whence your Excellency supposes them to originate; neither can I allow, that they are committed without directions from the commander-in-chief in Canada. For by prisoners and deserters it is apparent, that those ravaging parties are composed of white troops, under the command of officers regularly commissioned, as well as savages; and it would be a solecism to sup-

pose, that such parties could be out, without the knowledge of their commander-in-chief. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO JAMES McHENRY.

VERPLANCK'S POINT, 12 September, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

* * * Our prospects of peace are vanishing. The death of the Marquis of Rockingham has given a shock to the new administration, and disordered its whole system. Fox, Burke, Lord John Cavendish, Lord Keppel, and I believe others, have left it. Earl Shelburne takes the lead, as first lord of the treasury, to which office he was appointed by the King, on the instant the vacancy happened by the death of Lord Rockingham. This nobleman, Lord Shelburne, I mean, declares, that the sun of Great Britain will set the moment American independency is acknowledged, and that no man has ever heard him give an assent to the measure. On the other hand, the Duke of Richmond asserts, that the ministry, of which Lord Shelburne is one, came into office pledged to each other and upon the express condition, that America should be declared independent; that he will watch him, and, the moment he finds him departing therefrom, he will quit administration, and give it every opposition in his power.

[1] Sir Guy Carleton had written: "If these Indians come not solely to revenge the cruelties practised on their brethren, their motives are to me wholly unknown. To my knowledge, they cannot have directions from the commander-in-chief on that side; and these proceedings not only have my disapprobation, but I shall very willingly assist in restoring tranquillity on that frontier also."—August 29th.

That the King will push the war, as long as the nation will find men or money, admits not of a doubt in my mind. The whole tenor of his conduct, as well as his last proroguing speech, on the 11th of July, plainly indicate it, and shows in a clear point of view the impolicy of relaxation on our part. If we are wise, let us prepare for the worst. There is nothing, which will so soon produce a speedy and honorable peace, as a state of preparation for war; and we must either do this, or lay our account for a patched up inglorious peace, after all the toil, blood, and treasure we have spent. This has been my uniform opinion; a doctrine I have endeavored, amidst the torrent of expectation of an approaching peace, to inculcate, and the event, I am sure, will justify me in it. With much truth, I am, &c.[1]

TO JOSEPH REED.

DEAR SIR, VERPLANCK'S POINT, 15 September, 1782.

The appeal contained in your letter of the 11th instant is equally unexpected and surprising.[2]

Not knowing the particular charges which are

[1] The first division of the French Army, under Count de Rochambeau, arrived at King's Ferry, from the south, on the 15th of September. Count de Rochambeau describes the junction of the French and American armies as follows:

"General Washington wishing to testify his respect for France, and his recognition of the benefits she had rendered, caused us to pass between two lines of troops, clad, equipped, and armed with clothing and arms from France, and from the English magazines taken at Yorktown, which the French army had relinquished to the Americans. He ordered the drums to beat a French march during the whole review, and the two armies rejoined with the most lively demonstrations of reciprocal satisfaction."—*Mémoires de Rochambeau*, tom. i., p. 309.

[2] Reed had become engaged in an acrid political controversy with General Cadwallader, in which it was charged that in December, 1776, he had medi-

alledged against you, it is impossible for me to make a specific reply. I can therefore only say in general terms that the employments you sustained in the year 1776, and in that period of the year, when we experienced our greatest distresses, are a proof that you was not suspected by me of infidelity, or want of integrity; for had the least suspicion of the kind reached my mind, either from observation or report, I should most assuredly have marked you out as a fit object of resentment.

While on our retreat through Jersey, I remember your being sent from Newark, to the Assembly of New Jersey, then sitting, to rouse and animate them to spirited measures for our support; and at the same time gen. Mifflin was sent to Pennsylvania for the same purpose. This employ was certainly a mark of my confidence in you at that time.

Your conduct, so far as it came to my immediate notice, during the short period we lay on the west bank of the Delaware, appeared sollicitous for the public good; and your conduct at Princeton evidenced a spirit and zeal which to me appeared laudable and becoming a man well effected to the cause we were engaged in.

It is rather a disagreeable circumstance to have private and confidential letters, hastily written as all mine of that class are, upon a supposition that they would remain between the parties only, produced as evidence in a matter of public discussion; but conscious

tated going over to the British. He asked Washington for "a few lines expressive of your sense of my conduct in the fall and winter of 1776," and to give his sanction to using the letters Washington had written to him at that time.

that my public and private sentiments are at all times alike; I shall not withhold these letters should you think them absolutely necessary to your justification.

If I have in my possession any such letter as you particularly allude to, it is not at present with me—being in the field perfectly light, I have divested myself of all papers, public and private; but such of late date as I thought I might have occasion, in my present situation to refer to. The others remain at a considerable distance from me. I am, &c.

TO THOMAS PAINE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 18 September, 1782.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge your favor of the 7th, informing of your proposal to present me with fifty copies of your last publication [1] for the amusement of the army. For this intention you have my sincere thanks, not only on my own account, but for the pleasure, I doubt not the gentlemen of the army will receive from the perusal of your pamphlets.

Your observations on the *period of seven years*, as it applies itself to and affects British minds, are

[1] Probably one of the numbers of the *Crisis*. Paine was now writing a series of articles under that title, suited to the political state of the times. He had laid aside his pen for several months, when, in the February preceding, Mr. Robert Morris induced him to take it up again, and promised him a stipulated sum of money as a compensation for his services. This was done with the knowledge and approbation of General Washington, who was then in Philadelphia. The *Crisis* was accordingly revived, and continued to the end of the war. See on this subject an extract from Mr. Morris' *Diary*, in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xii., p. 95.—*Sparks*.

ingenious, and I wish it may not fail of its effects in the present instance.[1] The measures and the policy of the enemy are at present in great perplexity and embarrassment. But I have my fears, whether their necessities, (which are the only operating motive with them,) are yet arrived to that point, which must drive them unavoidably into what they will esteem disagreeable and dishonorable terms of peace; such, for instance, as an absolute, unequivocal admission of American independence, on the terms upon which she can accept it. For this reason, added to the obstinacy of the King, and the probable consonant principles of some of the principal ministers, I have not so full confidence in the success of the present

[1] "I fully believe we have seen our worst days over. The spirit of the war on the part of the enemy is certainly on the decline, full as much as we think for. I draw this opinion, not only from the difficulties we know they are in, and the present promiscuous appearance of things, but from the peculiar effect, which certain periods of time have more or less upon all men. The British have accustomed themselves to think of the term of *seven years* in a manner different from other periods of time. They acquire this partly by habit, by religion, by reason, and by superstition. They serve seven years apprenticeship; they elect their parliament for seven years; they punish by seven years' transportation, or the duplicate, or triplicate of that term; their leases run in the same manner; and they read that Jacob served seven years for one wife and seven years for another; and the same term, likewise, extinguishes all obligations (in certain cases) of debt, or matrimony; and thus this particular period, by a variety of concurrences, has obtained an influence in their minds superior to that of any other number.

"They have now had seven years' war, and are not an inch farther on the continent than when they began. The superstitious and the popular part will conclude that it is *not to be*; and the reasonable part will think they have tried an unsuccessful scheme long enough, and that it is in vain to try it any longer; and the obstinate part of them will be beaten out, unless, consistent with their former sagacity, they get over the matter at once, by passing a new declaratory act *to bend Time in all cases whatsoever*, or declare him a rebel."—*Thomas Paine to Washington*, September 7th.

negotiation for peace as some gentlemen entertain. Should events prove my jealousies to be ill founded, I shall make myself happy under the mistake, consoling myself with the idea of having erred on the safest side, and enjoying with as much satisfaction as any of my countrymen the pleasing issue of our severe contest. The case of Captain Asgill has indeed been spun out to a great length. But with you I hope that its determination will not be unfavorable to this Country. I am, Sir, &c.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

VERPLANCK'S POINT, 19 September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 11th. The political intelligence which we have lately had from Europe is so contradictory, that little dependence can be put upon it, more especially as we have it principally through the channel of an enemy's paper, which I take it for granted, shews as fair a side as possible in their own favor.

Why we have nothing from our ministers is, as you observe, truly unaccountable. In the Parliamentary debates consequent of the death of the Marquis of Rockingham and the resignation of Fox, Burke, &c., one side assert, and the other side deny matters so confidently, that there is no possibility of forming an accurate judgment. I cannot but look upon Lord Rockingham's death, however, as the most unfortunate event, and that, at best, the negociation if not

broken off, will be spun out to a considerable length. This, however, will be soon known, for if the ministry are seriously disposed to Peace, upon such terms as we can accept, their acts must soon evince it. In the meantime it will be our policy to proceed as if no negociations were on foot.

I am extremely glad to hear from good authority that the Dutch Fleet had put to sea. The arrival of public cloathing from Holland is an interesting event —as the army is more in want of Linen just now than of any other article—except money. * * *

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

HEAD QUARTERS, 22 September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I am really more alarmed at the Contents of your letters of the 29th and 30th of Augt. and 9th of this month, than at any occurrence which hath lately happened—and I am embarrassed with respect to one paragraph in that of the 30th of Augt., vizt., "The other which is the principal one, that you may found a warm application on it to the States. You will I hope keep this intirely to yourself. You will see that I have not intrusted a view of it to my Secretary or any the Clerks"—On what am I to found an application to the States but upon your information of your inability to comply with your Contracts in consequence of their tardiness in paying their Taxes? Should I proceed of my own accord, as it were, they will think I am stepping out of my line, and may per

haps hint to me that this reprehension would come more properly from another quarter—Until I hear from you I do not think myself at liberty to make use of your name. But ought we not, my dear Sir, to consider the danger of trusting a matter of so much importance, just at this moment when perhaps the enemy are balancing upon the total evacuation of these States, to a circular letter to the Legislatures? Letters of this kind are, from their nature, as public as the prints, and seldom fail by one means or the other to get into the hands of the enemy. I have several times found personal applications by Gentlemen of influence have much more effect than letters. Of this you will judge—and I think another matter ought immediately to be taken into most serious consideration—If you would be of opinion that the most strenuous exertions of the States will not enable them to pay in a sufficiency of Specie to comply with the Contracts, ought not a change of measures to be resolved on without loss of time? That if we must, thro' necessity, revert to the ruinous system of Specifics, it may be done in time to lay up magazines before the Winter sets in. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD QUARTERS, VERPLANCK'S POINT,
23 September, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

Since my last of the 6th of August I have received your favors of the 6th of June, 11th of July and 12 of August.

I hope before this reaches you, you will be in possession of Charleston, and will have found a glorious end to your difficulties and distresses in the southern quarter.

An application from the government of South Carolina produced the resolve, of which the enclosed[1] is a copy, and which, I doubt not, was immediately transmitted to you. From your being upon the spot, and from your thorough knowledge of southern affairs, I shall leave the execution of the resolve in a great measure to your own judgment. As you observe in your letter of the 12th of August, when my directions of the 18th March last were given, they were upon a presumption, that the enemy might evacuate Charleston in such season, that the troops destined to return to the northward might be here time enough to render service before the close of the campaign; but, that not being the case, their immediate removal does not become so essential; and therefore I leave it with you, either to retain the corps, which you may ultimately determine to send northward, until the weather becomes favorable for marching in the spring, or to send them forward immediately, as far as Virginia at least, if you find their subsistence more difficult and expensive, than it would be in the middle States. I will just give you a hint, that I fear subsistence will be upon a very precarious footing here during the winter; and you know the inconvenience of having troops arrive at their cantonments late in the season.

[1] Resolve of the 9th of Sept. respecting Southern Army.

The arrangement made by you for the distribution of the southern army agrees perfectly, in the main, with my own judgment. I think, for the following reason, that the first and third regiments of cavalry had best be left in Carolina. They both belong to Virginia, and will more than probably be incorporated the next year. Their separation, therefore, would render the incorporation difficult; and, as cavalry are of no great use in this quarter in offensive operations, and more easily subsisted southward than here, I am not anxious to have Lee's legion. But with this you will do as you think best. Armand's legion will not advance. I shall recommend their wintering in Virginia, as forage will be extremely scarce in all this country, owing to the severest drought ever known.

By the resolve before alluded to, I am directed to make the necessary inquiry into the circumstances of the southern States, and to employ such force therein as I may think proper, and to direct you, whilst in the southern department, to employ the troops under your command offensively or defensively in such manner as may be most conducive to the interests of the United States.

The execution of the foregoing, I must, for the reasons mentioned in the beginning of my letter, leave also to you. Should the enemy evacuate the southern States, I know of no offensive operations but against St. Augustine, or the savages. The first I believe is out of our power, even were we authorized to undertake such an expedition; and the last must depend upon contingencies. I do not apprehend

much danger from the savages, when the British are expelled from the seacoast.

You will perceive it is the intention of Congress, that you should remain personally at the southward until further orders. You will, I doubt not, use every argument to induce those States to exert themselves in raising a permanent force for their own defence. They cannot expect, that, if the enemy evacuate the southern States, and keep a footing at New York, and at other places to the northward and eastward, that a force of almost half the Union should be kept in the southern States for defence only.

The situation of politics, I mean European, is upon so precarious a footing, that I really know not what account to give you of them. Negotiations were still going on at Paris in the middle of July; but the prospects of a peace were checked by the death of the Marquis of Rockingham. Dr. Franklin's laconic description of the temper of the British nation seems most apt. "They are," says he, "unable to carry on the war, and too proud to make peace." I am, &c.

TO JAMES DUANE, IN CONGRESS.

VERPLANCK'S POINT, 30th September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I shall be obliged to you, or some friend in Congress to inform me what has been or is likely to be done with respect to my reference of the case of Captn. Huddy. I cannot forbear complaining of the cruel situation I now am and oftentimes have been

placed in, by the silence of Congress in matters of high importance, which the good of Service, and my official duty have obliged me to call upon them, as the sovereign power of these United States, to decide. It is only in intricate and perplexing cases, that I have requested their orders, being always willing to bear my proportion of public embarrassments, and take a full share of responsibility. Conscious that I have treated that Honble. Body, and all their measures, with as much deference and respect as any Officer in the United States, I expected this aid.

Why, then, if policy forbids a decision upon the difficult points I have referd., I am not to be informed of it, is beyond my conception, unless I was to ascribe it to causes, which I flatter myself do not exist. When I refer a matter to Congress, every proceeding on it on my part is suspended, until their pleasure is transmitted; and for this it is well known I have waited with unexampled patience. But when no notice is taken of my application; when measures, which I might otherwise adopt, are suspended; when my own feelings are wounded, and others perhaps are suffering by the delay, how is it possible for me to forbear expressing my disquietude?

The particular cause of it at this time arises from two things. First, while I am totally silent to the *public*, waiting the decision of Congs. on the case of Huddy, I see publications on this head (importing reflections) in one of the Pennsylvania Papers, which no man could have made, that had not access to my official letter of the 19th of August to Congress; and,

secondly, because I feel exceedingly for Captn. Asgill, who was designated by Lot as a victim to the manes of Captain Huddy. While retaliation was apparently necessary, however disagreeable in itself, I had no repugnance to the measure. But, when the end proposed by it is answered, by a disavowal of the act, by a dissolution of the Board of Refugees, by a promise whether with or without meaning to comply with it, I shall not determine, that further inquisition should be made into the matter, I thought it incumbent upon me, to have the sense of Congress, who had most explicitly approved, and impliedly indeed ordered retaliation to take place before I proceeded any further in the matter. To this hour I am held in darkness.

The letter of Asgill, (copy of which I inclose,) and the situation of his Father, which I am made acquainted with by the British prints, work too powerfully upon my humanity not to wish, that Congress would chalk a line for me to walk by in this business. To effect this, is the cause of the trouble you now receive from, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.[1]

[1] Captain Asgill had been for some time released from close confinement, and allowed to go at large on parole at Chatham and in the neighborhood of that place. He wrote to General Washington, requesting permission to return to Europe, on account of the illness of his father, and the distressed state of his mother and sister in consequence of that event, and of their anxiety for the fate impending over the son and brother.

In writing to the Secretary at War, a week after the above letter, General Washington said: "The delay of Congress places me not only in a very delicate, but a very awkward situation with the expecting world. Was I to give my private opinion respecting Asgill, I should pronounce in favor of his being released from his duress, and that he should be permitted to go to his friends in Europe."—October 7th.

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.[1]

MY DEAR SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 2 October, 1782.

Painful as the task is to describe the dark side of our affairs, it sometimes becomes a matter of indispensable necessity. Without disguise or palliation, I will inform you candidly of the discontents, which at this moment prevail universally throughout the army.

The complaint of evils, which they suppose almost remediless, are the total want of money or the means of existing from one day to another, the heavy debts they have already incurred, the loss of credit, the distress of their families (i. e. such as are married) at home, and the prospect of poverty and misery before them. It is vain, Sir, to suppose, that military men will acquiesce contentedly with bare rations, when those in the civil walk of life, (unacquainted with half the hardships they endure,) are regularly paid the emoluments of office. While the human mind is influencd. by the same passions, and have ye same inclinations to indulge, it cannt. be. A military man has

[1] This letter was enclosed to Robert Morris, to whom Washington wrote: "I confess it seems to me, not only an act of policy but of justice, instead of irritating the minds of our officers and men, to soothe and accommodate them in all their reasonable wishes and expectations, as far as the circumstances will admit it. I am sensible you coincide entirely in the same sentiment."—20 October, 1782. And to McHenry, whose needs were urgent, he wrote on the 23d [or 24th] of October:

"To make such an application as you require to the Financier, would, I know, be unavailing—first, because he has most decidedly refused to adjust, & discharge the claim of any Officer who is a resident in & the subject of the United States—and secondly, every other consideration apart what would alone be a sufficient bar—because he has not the means of doing it—The States are so tardy in collecting the Taxes, that the most trivial sum cannot be obtained for the most pressing purposes—and in one sense, it may be said, that the Officers of the Army are actually starving for want of a small portion of their

the same turn to sociability as a person in civil life. He conceives himself equally called upon to live up to his rank, and his pride is hurt when circumstans. restrain him. Only conceive, then, the mortification they (even the general officers) must suffer, when they cannot invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a travelling acquaintance, to a better repast, than stinking whiskey (and not always that) and a bit of Beef without vegetables will afford them.

The officers also complain of other hardships, which they think might and ought to be remedied without delay; such as the stopping promotions, where there have been vacancies open for a long time; the withholding commissions from those, who are justly entitled to them, and have warrants or certificates of their appointments from the executive of their States; and particularly the leaving the compensation for their services in a loose, equivocal state, without ascertaining their claims upon the public, or making provision for the future payment of them.

pay—the Horses of it, for want of money to procure forage, are actually in this condition—In a word, Sir, for want of a little money to pay the transportation of some very essential articles, the Troops have suffered, & continue to suffer amazingly; and for the want of the said money, we have been obliged to relinquish a contract for subsisting the Army at 10d a Ration & give 13d for the sake of three months credit.

"There have been instances I know, where some foreign Officers, who had no state to resort to—& who were reduced to the last extremity—have received a small part of their pay, but trifling in comparison of their demands, or dues. —Judge ye therefore under these circumstances, how fruitless would be any application to the Financier for money.

"The only mode I am told, by which you can be relieved, is for me to apply to Congress to recommend your case to the State of Maryland; that you may be included in the Officers belonging to it—this I have accordingly done (as you may see by the Inclosed) through its proper channel—the Secretary at War —who is now here, and on whom I shall enforce the measure in terms which I persuade myself will give facility to an official act."

While I premise, that tho' no one I have seen or heard of appears opposed to the principle of reducing the army as circumstances may require, yet I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contemplation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury and what they call the ingratitude of the public, involved in debts without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and sufered everything human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death. I repeat it, in these irritable circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or brighten the gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature. On the other hand, could the officers be placed in as good a situation, as when they came into service, the contention, I am persuaded, would be, not who should continue in the field, but who should retire to private life.

I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the real life would justify me in doing, or I would give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But, you may rely upon it, the patience and long-sufferance of this army are almost exhausted, and that there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I

think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of out rage; but when we retire into winter-quarters, (unless the storm is previously dissipated,) I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace.

To you, my dear Sir, I need not be more particular in describing my anxiety and the grounds of it. You are too well acquainted, from your own service, with the real sufferings of the army, to require a longer detail. I will, therefore, only add, that, exclusive of the common hardships of a military life, our troops have been and still are obliged to perform more services foreign to their proper duty, without gratuity or reward, than the soldiers of any other army; for example, the immense labors expended in doing the duties of artificers in erecting fortifications and military works, the fatigue of building themselves barracks or huts annually, and of cutting and transporting wood for the use of all our posts and garrisons without any expense whatever to the public.

Of this letter, (which, from the tenor of it, must be considered in some degree of a private nature,) you may make such use as you shall think proper, since the principal objects of it were, by displaying the merits, the hardships, the disposition, and critical state of the army, to give information that might eventually be useful, and to convince you with what entire confidence and esteem, I am, my dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] To some of the topics of this letter General Lincoln replied, in his private capacity, as follows:

"You mention as a ground of complaint, that the compensation to the army for their services is left in a loose, equivocal state, and of this I am fully con-

TO JAMES McHENRY.

VERPLANCK'S POINT, 17 October, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

In a visit to the Post of Dobb's Ferry last Saturday, I accidently met with Majr. Lynch at that place, and received from him your letter of the 30th ulto.

In a time like this, of general uncertainty, with respect to the designs of the British Court, it is not at all wonderful to find men engineering at every Corner for News—The North sends to the South, and the

vinced; and from the knowledge I have of the temper of Congress, I have little expectation that the matter of half-pay, to which I suppose you allude, will be in a better situation than it now is, until it shall be recommended by Congress to the several States to provide for their own officers; which I am apprehensive will not be done unless Congress know in some way or other, that it is the wish of the officers that they should do it.

"You know, Sir, that no moneys can be appropriated but by the voice of nine States. There was not that number in favor of half-pay, when the vote to grant it passed in Congress, which was a vote before the confederation was signed and practised upon, but it is not now. I see little probability, that a sum equal to the half-pay will be appropriated to that purpose, and apportioned on the several States. Massachusetts is one of those States, which have always been opposed to the measure. Indeed, there is but one State east of this, which agreed to it. In the first place, there is too great a part of the Union opposed to the half-pay to think of carrying it through. The States in opposition cannot be coerced. They say they are willing to make a handsome compensation by compromise, and that they will give a sum which shall be just and honorable. From this it will be difficult, if not impossible, to persuade them to depart. I am myself fully of opinion, that it will be much the best for the army to be referred to their several States, and that their expectations will end in chagrin and disappointments if they look for half-pay from Congress. Let us for a moment reflect how Congress will avail themselves of money to discharge this debt. They cannot appropriate any part of the sum to this use, which shall be annually apportioned on the several States, for the reasons I mentioned before; there are not nine States in favor of it. Should it be said, that it may be paid out of the revenue of some general tax, it will not remove the objection. The money arising from these general taxes must also be appropriated, if such taxes were passed. No one of those proposed has yet passed, and I see little probability that any of them will soon, if ever."—October 14th.

South to the North, to obtain it.—But at present, all I believe are equally ignorant.—My opinion of the matter is, that you could learn nothing decisive from the Cabinet itself.—I have long thought, and still think, they are trying the Chapter of accidents; and the good or ill success alone of this campaign, will fix their Councils. If they can obtain any advantages at Sea, or in the Indies—East or West, no matter where—I am of opinion they will continue the War—If their affairs on the other hand stand still, or continue to retrograde, their stomachs will come to, & Peace will be seriously thought of—

From a letter I had from Marqs. De la Fayette of the 29th of June, nothing more could be collected than that doubts & darkness prevailed—that the business of Grenville, seemed to be that of procrastination.—In a word, that nothing was fixed; and that the cause of his stay was to see matters in such a train as to find the way clear before he left France.—In New Yk. they are as impatient as us for News—expecting the August Packet will remove all doubts, but herein they will be mistaken—later acc'ts than the Packet can bring, leave the negotiations at Paris in as doubtful a state as ever—A Letter which I have just received from Boston gives me the inclosed as an extract of a Letter from Mr. Adams (as this is a private letter, Mr. Adams's name had better be withheld) of the 20 of Augt. from the Hague.—The Boston Gazette says, that the Combined Fleets had left the Channel, and that the Jamaica Fleet got in four days afterwards.—It also gives an acct. of an Action

in the East Indies between the French & British Fleets, in which, after a hard fought action, they say victory inclined to the latter but that the Ships of Admiral Hughes were so much damaged he could not pursue—this is such an acknowledgment (from a British acct.) as to leave little to be apprehended from it.

You will recollect the opinion I gave you upon the receipt of Carleton's letter of the 2d of August to me. Subsequent events, as far as they have come to my knowledge prove it was well founded—& I wish future ones may not evince that to gain time, was all that the British ministry had in view—The impolicy therefore of suffering ourselves to be lulled by expectations of Peace, because we wish it, & because it is the Interest of G. Britain to hold up the ideas of it, will, more than probably, prove the ruin of our cause & the disbanding of the Army; for it should seem from the conduct the States are pursuing—that they do not conceive it necessary for the Army to receive any thing but hard knocks—to give them pay, is a matter which has long been out of the question; and we were upon the point of trying how we could live on without subsistence (as the superintendent was no longer able to fulfil his Contract with the Victualers of the Army, & they relinquishing it) when fortunately for us we met with Gentlemen, who, for an advanced price pr Ration, has saved us from starvation, or disbandment by giving a credit—Our horses have long been without everything which their own thriftiness could not procure.

Let any man who will allow reason fair play, ask himself what must be the inevitable consequence of such policy.—Have not military men the same feelings of those in the Civil line?—why then should one set receive the constant wages of service—and the other be continually without them?—do the former deserve less for their watchings and toil—for enduring heat & cold—for standing in sunshine & in rain—for the dangers they are continually exposed to for the sake of their Country; by which means the man in Civil life sits quiet under his own Vine & Fig tree—solacing himself in all the comforts—pleasures—& enjoyments of life, free & unrestrained? let impartiality answr. the question.

These are matters worthy of serious consideration —The patience—the fortitude—the long, & great suffering of this army is unexampled in history; but there is an end to all things & I fear we are very near one to this.—Which, more than probably will oblige me to stick very close to my flock this winter, & try like a careful physician, to prevent, if possible, the disorders getting to an incurable height.

I am yr. very obedt. & affectn. servt.

P. S. I have this moment received a letter from the Marqs. De Vaudreuil informg. me, that a Vessel just arrived from Cadiz, wch. place she left the 24th of Augt., brings advices that the day following was fixed upon for a genl. assault of the Works at Gibralter, by ye combined force of F. & Spn.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 19 October, 1782.

SIR,

I have received your favor of the 15th instant with the enclosures; and, though at the same time it is true, I have the general command of the allied army, as to all its movements, operations, &c., yet I have never considered myself as having an absolute right to interfere with the internal police and regulations of the French army, under the immediate orders of his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau; with which army it appears the persons mentioned in the papers contained in your letter are connected. I have, however, in order to produce an amicable settlement of the matter, communicated the contents to Colonel Wadsworth, and requested him to use his utmost endeavors to prevent any altercations and quarrels between the citizens of this State and the people employed by him. As he has engaged, that they will not impede the due execution of the civil authority, and as he writes to you by this conveyance, I cannot but hope matters will be explained to your satisfaction.[1]

For my own part I shall still continue to exert all my influence and authority to prevent the interruption of that harmony, which is so essential, and which has so generally prevailed between the army and the

[1] Colonel Wadsworth was the contractor for supplying the French army, and a deputy under him had refused to submit to a constable, who served upon him a justice's warrant. This was considered a contempt of the civil authority, and caused a complaint to be forwarded by the justice to the governor of the State.

inhabitants of the country; and I need scarcely add, that in doing this I shall give every species of countenance and support to the execution of the laws of the land.

In the present quiet state of the frontiers, and with assurances from Sir Guy Carleton, that the incursions of the savages are stopped by authority, I have it in contemplation to withdraw the Continental troops from the northward. There are many reasons, which will make that measure eligible, unless the troops, which have been raised on purpose for the defence of the frontiers of this State, should be thought incompetent to the duty, even taking into consideration the inactivity of the season and the situation of affairs; for, indeed, I confess, I do not consider the late reports of the enemy's being in force at the Isle-au-Noix to indicate any thing farther than an attention to their own security. The severity of the approaching season, and every other circumstance, appear to me to militate against an attack upon our possessions this winter, and we shall not be at so great a distance, but that succor may be afforded as early in the spring as shall be necessary. At any rate, some measures must be immediately taken relative to the troops now there. I should be happy in receiving your sentiments as soon as may be, and am with great esteem and regard, &c.

P. S. I should be much obliged by an answer at the return of the bearer.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

VERPLANCK'S POINT, 20 October, 1782.

MY DEAR MARQS.,

Whilst I thought there was a probability of my letters finding you in France, I continued to write to you at Paris. After that, I ceased to do so, expecting the more agreeable pleasure of embracing you in America. Your favor of the 29th of June, placing the time of your departure from thence on a contingency, and our latest advices from Europe, reporting that the negotiations for Peace were nearly in the same state as at the commencement of it, I shall renew my correspondence.

I approve, very highly, the motives which induced you to remain at your Court and I am convinced Congress will do the same—The Campaign, as you supposed, has been very inactive—We formed the junction with the French Corps (which is now encamped on our left ten miles distant) the middle of September; and have remained in perfect unison with them ever since their arrival. It may I believe with much truth be said, that a greater harmony between two Armies never subsisted than that which has prevailed between the French and Americans since the first junction of them last year. I had prepared a beautiful Corps for you to command, that would not, I am convinced, either in their appearance or action, have discredited any Officer, or Army whatever. It consisted of all the light Infantry of the Northern Army, to which Sheldon's Legion would have been added. But we have done nothing more

than to keep a watch upon the enemy this Campaign except restraining them from detaching; which I believe has been the consequence of our junction, and lying here. A few German Troops, and Refugees have been sent to Hallifax; from thence it was supposed they were to proceed to Canada. This took place before I came into the Field, which was on the last day of August. The cold weather puts us in mind of warm fire sides, and the two Armies will separate for this or some other purpose in the course of a few days. The French Army will go Easterly, we Northerly, and shall fix our cantonments in the vicinity of West point.

The Enemy in New York make no scruple of declaring their intention of evacuating Charles town. Many Transports went from the former about a month ago; with design, it was said, to take off the Garrison; but whether it is to be brought to the last mentioned place or carried to the West Indies is mere matter of conjecture—very probably the British Troops may go to the latter, and the foreigners to the former. Time only will shew this, as indeed it may another thing, viz—that the late changes in the British Councils may prevent the evacuation of it at all.

With respect to New York, various opinions have prevailed. Some thought the speedy evacuation of it inevitable; others, that it would be delayed till the spring; while a third set, less sanguine than either of the other two, believed that nothing short of military force would ever free the city of them, their whole

design being, to amuse the Belligerent Powers and deceive America, till they could put their marine and other matters in a more prosperous train for prosecuting the war. The first, it is certain, were in an error, because the Troops are still at New York, but which of the other two may be right, your knowledge from what is transacting on the European theater enables you to judge better of than I. Certain it is, the loyalists and Refugees in New York are very much alarmed, and know not what to expect. As certain it is, Sir Guy Carleton holds himself in readiness to evacuate, or perform any other movement with his Army; while he endeavors assiduously in the mean while to propagate the favorable disposition of Great Britain to grant every thing America can require. Their Transports have wooded and watered, and lay ready for any Service; so have the Ships of War under Admiral Pigot, but I believe they are designed for the West Indies, with *part* of the Troops at New York, more than for any other purpose.—

You will have heard before this Letter can reach you, of the loss of the L'Eagle—it will be unpleasant therefore to repeat it—every body laments the misfortune, and pities poor L'Touche.—Duke Lauzun has been very sick but is now recovering fast—tho' very thin and pale.

Poor Laurens[1] is no more.—He fell in a trifling skirmish in South Carolina, attempting to prevent the Enemy from plundering the country of rice. Genl. Lee is also dead, he breathed his last at Phila-

[1] Laurens was killed at Chehaw Neck on the 27th of August.

delphia about a fortnight ago. Your aid G. W—— has had an intermittent fever ever since April, and by the last accounts of him from Mount Vernon, where he is, he was very low and weak. As I despair of seeing my home this Winter, I have just sent for Mrs. Washington, who will think herself honored by yours and Madm. La Fayette's notice. Make a tender of my best respects to her, and offer a blessing in my name to your Son, and my God Son. Present me also to Count Charlux and others with whom I have the honor of an acquaintance. The Count de Noailles will have the trouble of reading a letter from me. Adieu, my dear Marqs. believe me, &c.

TO DOCTOR WILLIAM GORDON.

DEAR SIR, VERPLANCK'S POINT, 23 October, 1782.

I have been honored with your favor of the 2d Inst., & thank you for the extract of Mr. Adams's letter.

I never was among the sanguine ones, consequently shall be less disappointed than People of that description, if our warfare should continue. From hence (it being the opinion of some Men that our expectations have an accordance with our wishes) it may be inferred that mine are for a prolongation of the War.—But maugre this doctrine, and the opinion of others that a continuation of the War till the Powers of Congress—or political systems —and general form of Government are better established—I can say with much truth, that there is not

[1] George Augustine Washington.

a man in America that more fervently wishes for Peace, and a return to private life than I do.—Nor will any man go back to the rural & domestick enjoyments of it with more Heartfelt pleasure than I shall. —It is painful to me therefore, to accompany this declaration with an opinion that while the present King can maintain the influence of his Crown, & extort Men & Money from his subjects, so long will the principles by which he is governed push him on in his present wild career.—The late change in his Ministry is an evidence of this—and other changes which I suspect will soon take place, will convince us, I fear of the fallacy of our hopes.

It appears to me impracticable for the best Historiographer living, to write a full & correct history of the present revolution, who has not free access to the Archives of Congress—those of Individual States—the Papers of the Commander in chief, & commanding officers of separate departments. Mine, while the war continues, I consider as a species of Public property, sacred in my hands; & of little service to any Historian who has not that general information that is only to be derived with exactitude from the sources I have mentioned. When Congress then shall open their registers, & say it is proper for the servants of the public to do so, it will give me much pleasure to afford all the aid to your labors & laudable undertaking which my Papers can give—till one of those periods arrive I do not think myself justified in suffering an inspection of and extracts to be taken from my Records. * * *

TO CAPTAIN CHARLES ASGILL.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 13 November, 1782.

SIR,

It affords me singular pleasure, to have it in my power to transmit to you the enclosed copy of an act of Congress, of the 7th instant, by which you are released from the disagreeable circumstances in which

[1] The case of Captain Asgill was laid before Count de Vergennes by Lady Asgill, and that minister wrote the following letter to Washington:

"It is not in quality of a King, the friend and ally of the United States, (though with the knowledge and consent of his Majesty) that I now have the honor to write to your Excellency. It is as a man of sensibility and a tender father, who feels all the force of paternal love, that I take the liberty to address to your Excellency my earnest solicitations in favor of a mother and family in tears. Her situation seems the more worthy of notice on our part, as it is to the humanity of a nation at war with her own, that she has recourse, for what she ought to receive from the impartial justice of her own generals.

"I have the honor to enclose to your Excellency a copy of a letter, which Lady Asgill has just written me. I am not known to her, nor was I acquainted that her son was the unhappy victim, destined by lot to expiate the odious crime that a formal denial of justice obliges you to avenge. Your Excellency will not read this letter without being extremely affected: it had that effect upon the King and Queen, to whom I communicated it. The goodness of their Majesties' hearts induces them to desire, that the inquietudes of an unfortunate mother may be calmed, and her tenderness reassured. I felt, Sir, that there are cases where humanity itself exacts the most extreme rigor; perhaps the one now in question may be of the number; but, allowing reprisals to be just, it is not less horrid to those who are the victims; and the character of your Excellency is too well known, for me not to be persuaded that you desire nothing more than to be able to avoid the disagreeable necessity.

"There is one consideration, Sir, which, though it is not decisive, may have an influence on your resolution. Captain Asgill is doubtless your prisoner, but he is among those whom the arms of the King contributed to put into your hands at Yorktown. Although this circumstance does not operate as a safeguard, it however justifies the interest I permit myself to take in this affair. If it is in your power, Sir, to consider and have regard to it, you will do what is agreeable to their Majesties; the danger of young Asgill, the tears, the despair of his mother, affect them sensibly: and they will see with pleasure the hope of consolation shine out for those unfortunate people.

"In seeking to deliver Mr. Asgill from the fate which threatens him, I am far from engaging you to secure another victim; the pardon, to be perfectly

you have so long been. Supposing you would wish to go into New York as soon as possible, I also enclose a passport for that purpose.

Your letter of the 18th of October came regularly to my hands. I beg you to believe, that my not answering it sooner, did not proceed from inattention to you, or a want of feeling for your situation. I daily expected a determination of your case, and I thought it better to await that, than to feed you with hopes, that might, in the end, prove fruitless. You

satisfactory, must be entire. I do not imagine it can be productive of any bad consequences. If the English general has not been able to punish the horrible crime you complain of, in so exemplary a manner as he should, there is reason to think he will take the most efficacious measures to prevent the like in future.

"I sincerely wish, Sir, that my intercession may meet success; the sentiment which dictates it, and which you have not ceased to manifest on every occasion, assures me, that you will not be indifferent to the prayers and to the tears of a family, which has recourse to your clemency through me. It is rendering homage to your virtue to implore it."—Versailles, 29 July, 1782.

Washington sent the letter to Congress by special messenger, without any observations, and in that body the question was referred on the 29th to Rutledge, Osgood, Montgomery, Boudinot, and Duane. On September 7th was reported a resolution directing the release of Asgill. To the French minister Washington wrote on November 19th:

"This moment I received the resolution of Congress in favor of Captain Asgill. I transmitted it to him and at the same time sent him my Passport to go into New York. It will depend on him to go to Europe, if he pleases—his Parole not being limited."

"Your Excellency will have been informed, before this reaches you, of the liberation of Captain Asgill. I am, notwithstanding, directed to recall your attention to that part of your letter of the 3d of August last, in which you say, 'I have given orders to the judge-advocate to make further inquisition, and to collect evidence for the prosecution of such other persons as may appear to have been criminal in this transaction.' In full confidence, that measures have been taken to carry your Excellency's intentions into execution, I have to request the favor of you to inform me what probability there is, that the persons who have been really guilty of the action, which has been the subject of former discussion, will be brought to a proper account."—*Washington to Sir Guy Carleton*, 20 November, 1782. Sir Guy deprecated a reopening of the question, and it rested there.

will attribute my detention of the enclosed letters, which have been in my hands about a fortnight, to the same cause.

I cannot take leave of you, Sir, without assuring you, that, in whatever light my agency in this unpleasing affair may be viewed, I was never influenced, through the whole of it, by sanguinary motives, but by what I conceived a sense of my duty, which loudly called upon me to take measures, however disagreeable, to prevent a repetition of those enormities, which have been the subject of discussion. And that this important end is likely to be answered, without the effusion of the blood of an innocent person, is not a greater relief to you, than it is to, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

NEWBURGH, 21 November, 1782.

DEAR LUND,

My last letter would have informed you that I was disappointed in my application at Philadelphia for money, and that I had given up all thoughts of purchasing Dows' land. Since then, I have met with an offer of £2000 York currency, for which, if I take it, I shall have to pay at the rate of 7 pr. ct. per annum interest.

Under this disadvantage and the difficulty I may experience in procuring money for repayment of the loan, I would have you before any conclusion is come to with Dow and comy., wait upon Mrs. French and

Mr. Dulany for the last time, and know decidedly of them, whether, if a bargain is struck with Dow, they will make an even exchange—tract for tract. You may inform them as an apology for this application, that my reasons for requiring a definitive answer to this question are, that no man is better acquainted with their land than I am, so consequently, no person can be more fully convinced that £2000 is the full value of it;—more indeed, than I ever expected it would cost me, in case I should become the purchaser. That as this sum is the price fixed upon Dow's land, and two or three purchasers are ready to strike, and the sale of it is only suspended on my account, from a disposition in Mr. Adam to give me the preference, I cannot avoid deciding thereon immediately. That as Mrs. French is unwilling to part with her land without having the value of the two tracts ascertained; it is an evidence in my mind, that she has reason to believe hers will be highest valued, and lastly, if this should be the case, and I, in addition to the £2000 should have a further sum to pay, it would advance the price of her land in the neck so much beyond its real value, that I think it most prudent to forego the purchase of Dow's land as the means of effecting the exchange for hers, rather than run the hazard of paying too severely for the gratification of a mere fancy (for it is no more) of putting the whole neck under one fence; as it is well known that I stand in no need of land, or meadow for all my purposes.

In my letter of the 15th of March last to Mr. Dulany, I observed: "If there are lands for which Mrs.

French and you are disposed to barter your tract on Dogue Run, and these lands can be had upon *reasona ble terms*, it will in the end be the same thing to me, as a direct purchase." Whether the price fixed upon Dow's land is reasonable or not, I, never having seen or heard of it, shall not take upon me to determine : but as it is much higher than I conceived any tract of its size, adjoining the land on which Mrs. French lives, could possibly be rated, I have no doubt of its being optional in me to purchase it or not, as my abilities and inclination shall decide. If Dow's land contains half the improved, and improvable meadow which he says it does, and the difference could be determined by northern men, or men experienced in the worth of grass land, I should be sure of having it valued to considerably more than Mrs. French's ; and this you will readily believe when I tell you that improved meadow in this part of the country, many miles from any large town, sells from thirty to sixty pounds an acre. But my countrymen are too much used to corn blades and corn shucks ; and have too little knowledge of the profit of grass lands, to estimate Dow's meadow (if it is really good) at one quarter of its value ; and as the rest of the tract may be but ordinary, or at best middling forest land, I should not be candid, if I did not declare my apprehension that this tract would be undervalued, not designedly, but for want of a practical knowledge of the advantages which are to be derived from meadows. I therefore think it more consistent with common prudence, if there cannot be an even interchange, to relinquish

all hope of getting Mrs. French's land, than to run the hazard of paying infinitely more than the worth; especially, as I observed before, when I should only please my fancy, and that at the expence of my judgment, by getting in return lands which are very much worn, without meadow, or ground capable of making it; little timber or fire wood, and both very inconvenient; decayed fences, and some inclosures already dependent upon me for their security; and this too, when I am conscious that Dow's meadow alone, if it is as large and as good as he represents it, would yield more nett profit annually, than the labor of a dozen negroes on Mrs. French's farm would do, well-managed.

I have been thus particular that you may know my ultimate determination, and the reasons upon which it is founded. You have nothing more to do therefore, than to ask Mrs. French and Mr. Dulany simply whether they will take Dow's land for theirs, tract for tract. If they agree to it, then strike the bargain with Dow & Co., get writings suitable to the purpose of all parties executed, and draw upon me for the money. On the other hand, if they do not agree to it, acquaint Dow & Co. therewith, and thank them for the preference given me; and inform me as soon as possible of the final conclusion of the business, that the gentleman[1] who has offered me the money, may not be held in suspence. If I could get the money upon better terms than is offered, or if I knew how, or when I could replace it, I should have no objection to spec-

[1] Gov. George Clinton.

ulate in Dow's land, if it has the quantity of meadow described, for I am sure, so near Alexandria, as it lies, it will become immensely valuable. Remember me kindly to your wife & all friends. I am, &c.[1]

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

NEWBURG, 21 November, 1782.

DEAR LUND,

The letter which will be enclosed with this, will inform you that since my letter by the last post I have had the offer of £2000 York currency, and the terms of it. But before you strike any bargain with Dow and Co. for their land, I would have you view it critically, and form your own judgment of the quality of it. To do this with any degree of accuracy, you must estimate the quantity of improved and unimprovable meadow; the nature of it; the quantity of Hay the first will yield; and the expence which will attend the cutting and making of it; how much of the latter can be added, and the cost of doing it; these things, with a proper valuation of the other parts of the tract, will show you whether I shall be safe in giving the price asked. Or if Dow will pay such as he once said he wou'd give to whomsoever should be the purchaser, there need be no hesitation in that case neither; because the rent will amount to more than the interest of the money. If the price of this land will not stand the test of the first mode of valuation; and the second, as I suspect, was nothing more than a mere puff, and it shall appear that there is some collusion

[1] See *Washington to Robert Morris*, 8 January, 1783, p. 126, *post*.

or finesse in Dow & Co. to extort a high price from me, I know of but one other method by which you can proceed with propriety and safety; and that is, to pursue the mode which I have pointed out in the letter herewith enclosed, and which I have made a separate one, that you may as from *yourself*, candidly let them see, consider, and determine on it.

If all these expedients fail, (as of your own motion) you might suggest the following proposition, provided Dow & Co. will allow time for the operation of it, vizt: Let the four persons named by Mrs. French to ascertain the value of the two tracts agree upon the choice of a fifth (an odd number is essential, in case of a diversity of opinion, to give a deciding voice. It is also necessary for another reason which I shall not name, but which is too obvious not to strike you). Let these five ascertain, after a thorough review of both tracts, and due consideration given to the local situation of each, the advantages and disadvantages attending both, the quantity of the land, &c., &c., the value of each tract—as a tract. Let both parties be at liberty to agree or disagree to this valuation; but let Mrs. French and Mr. Dulany declare explicitly if they are satisfied with the valuation and difference which shall be adjudged by these five persons, that it shall be a bargain on their part, if I agree to it, and you to give me immediate notice of it, that I may also say yea, or nay.

You will have it in your power to inform Mr. Dulany, and may do it very truly, that I look upon £2000 to be a great price for his land; that my wishes to

obtain it do not proceed from its intrinsic value, but from the motives I have candidly assigned in my other letter. That to indulge this fancy, (for in truth there is more fancy than judgment in it) I have submitted, or am willing to submit, to the disadvantage of borrowing as large a sum as I think this Land is worth, in order to come at it; but that, rather than go beyond this, as he and Mrs. French for some reasons unknown to me certainly expect their land will be valued higher than Dow's;—I choose to forego the purchase of the latter, and relinquish thereby all prospect of obtaining his land through that means.

As the gentleman of whom I am to borrow the money will be held in suspense until I get a definitive answer from you, you will readily see the propriety of bringing the matter to issue some way or another, as soon as possible, and giving me notice. I am, &c.[1]

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
21 November, 1782.

SIR,

After I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of the 29th of July, I lost not a moment in transmitting it to Congress, who had then under deliberation the proceedings of the British court-martial upon Captain Lippincott for the murder of Captain Huddy, and the other documents relating to that inhuman transaction. What would otherwise

[1] On December 23d Washington notified Governor Clinton that the bargain was completed, and he should draw upon him for £1880 Virginia currency—that is, six shillings to the dollar.

have been the determination of that honorable body, I will not undertake to say; but I think I may venture to assure your Excellency, that your generous interposition had no small degree of weight in procuring that decision in favor of Captain Asgill, which he had no right to expect from the very unsatisfactory measures, which had been taken by the British commander-in-chief to atone for a crime of the blackest dye, not to be justified by the practices of war, and unknown at this day amongst civilized nations. I however flatter myself, that our enemies have been brought to view this transaction in its true light, and that we shall not experience a repetition of the like enormity.

Captain Asgill has been released, and is at perfect liberty to return to the arms of an affectionate parent, whose pathetic address to your Excellency could not fail of interesting every feeling heart in her behalf. I have no right to assume any particular merit from the lenient manner in which this disagreeable affair has terminated. But I beg you to believe, Sir, that I most sincerely rejoice, not only because your humane intentions are gratified, but because the event accords with the wishes of his Most Christian Majesty, and his royal and amiable consort, who, by their benevolence and munificence, have endeared themselves to every true American. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The army removed from the encampment at Verplanck's Point, crossed the Hudson at West Point, and, on the 28th of November, arrived at New Windsor, where they were cantoned in huts during the winter. The head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief were in the meantime re-established at Newburg.

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

HEAD QUARTERS, 10 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 8th last Evening by Express tho you have not met with that success you deserved and probably would have obtained had the Enterprise proceeded, yet I cannot but think your whole conduct in the affair was such as ought to entitle you still more to my confidence and esteem—for however it may be the practice of the World, and those who see objects but partially, or thro' a false medium to consider *that* only as meritorious which is attended with success, I have accustomed myself to judge of human Actions very differently and to appreciate them by the manner in which they are conducted, more than by the Event; which it is not in the power of human foresight and prudence to command—In this point of view I see nothing irreparable & little occasion of serious regret, except the wound of the gallant Captain Brewster, from which I sincerely hope he may recover—Another time you will have less opposition from the Winds and Weather, and success will amply compensate you for this little disappointment.

I have almost determined to post you with the Infantry of the Legion contiguous to the Sound, in which case I shall expect you to persevere in your endeavors to keep me perfectly advised of the State of the Enemy,—and perhaps some favorable moment may yet occur.

I am, Dear Sir, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

NEWBURG, 14 December, 1782.

I cannot, my dear Genl., permit you to depart from this Country, without repeating to you the high sense I entertain of the Services you have rendered to America, by the constant attention, which you have paid to the Interest of it, by the exact order and discipline of the corps under your command, and by your readiness, at all times, to give facility to every measure which the force of the combined armies was competent to.

To this testimony of your public character, I should be wanting to the feelings of my heart, was I not to add expressions of the happiness I have enjoyed in your private friendship, the remembrance of which will be one of the most pleasing circumstances of my life. My best wishes will accompany you to France, where I sincerely hope, and have no doubt, of your meeting with the smiles and rewards of a generous prince, and the warmest embraces of affectionate friends. Adieu. I have the honor to be, with great personal attachment, respect, and regard, your obedient and most humble servant.[1]

[1] Similar letters were written to others of the French commanders. Mr. Sparks prints one to the Baron de Vioménil, on whom devolved the command of the French troops after Rochambeau had left them, and to the Chevalier de Chastellux (vol. viii., 365, 366).

The fleet sailed from Boston on the 24th of December, with all the troops on board, except Lauzun's legion.

After Count de Rochambeau left the camp for Philadelphia, General Washington wrote to him as follows:

"It is with infinite satisfaction, that I embrace the earliest opportunity of sending to Philadelphia the cannon, which Congress were pleased to present to

TO JOSEPH JONES, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 14 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In the course of a few days, Congress will, I expect, receive an address from the army on the subject of their grievances. This address, though couched in very respectful terms, is one of those things, which, though unpleasing, is just now unavoidable. For I was very apprehensive once, that matters would take a more unfavorable turn, from the variety of discontents which prevail.

The temper of the army is much soured, and has become more irritable than at any period since the commencement of the war. This consideration alone prevented me (for every thing else seemed to be in a state of inactivity and almost tranquillity) from requesting leave to spend this winter in Virginia, that I might give some attention to my long-neglected

your Excellency, in testimony of their sense of the illustrious part you bore in the capture of the British army under Lord Cornwallis at York in Virginia. The carriages will follow by another conveyance. But, as they were not quite ready, I could not resist the pleasure, on that account, of forwarding these pieces to you previous to your departure, in hopes the inscription and devices, as well as the execution, may be agreeable to your wishes."—December 29th.

This letter was answered by Count de Rochambeau from Annapolis, in Maryland, just as he was on the point of sailing from that port to France. "Though I was gone from Philadelphia," said he, "before the cannon arrived there, give me leave to observe, that your usual attention and politeness have been shown to the last moment, of which this is a fresh proof. I write to the Chevalier de la Luzerne to keep them till peace, when they may be carried over without danger of being taken. We are just getting under sail. In this moment I renew to your Excellency my sincere acknowledgments for your friendship, and am with the most inviolable personal attachment and respect your obedient servant."—11 January, 1783.

The Marquis de Chastellux and General de Choisy sailed in the same vessel with the Count de Rochambeau.

private concerns. The dissatisfactions of the army had arisen to a great and alarming height, and combinations among the officers to resign at given periods in a body were beginning to take place, when, by some address and management, their resolutions have been converted into the form in which they will now appear before Congress. What that honorable body can or will do in the matter, does not belong to me to determine; but policy, in my opinion, should dictate soothing measures; as it is an uncontrovertible fact, that no part of the community has undergone equal hardships, and borne them with the same patience and fortitude, as the army has done.

Hitherto the officers have stood between the lower order of the soldiery and the public; and in more instances than one, at the hazard of their lives, have quelled very dangerous mutinies. But if their discontents should be suffered to rise equally high, I know not what the consequences may be. The spirit of enthusiasm, which overcame every thing at first, is now done away. It is idle, therefore, to expect more from military men, than from those discharging the civil departments of government. If both were to fare alike with respect to the emoluments of office, I would answer for it, that the military character should not be the first to complain. But it is an invidious distinction, and one that will not stand the test of reason or policy, that one set should receive all, and the other no part (or that which is next to it), of their pay. In a word, the experiment is dangerous; and, if it succeeded, would only prove, that the

one class are actuated by more zeal than the other, not that they have less occasion for their money. I am, with sincere esteem, &c.[1]

TO BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE.

NEWBURG, 18 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 5th of last month came safe to my hands—at this place; in the vicinity of which the Army is cantoned.

I am fully persuaded from all accounts, that in Posey you have to deal with a most consumate villain; and from your own, that you have pursued the most prudent method of managing him, and for obtaining that justice which is due to Mr. Custis's Estate. I am clear in Sentiment with you, that he should be removed from his present Stewardship as soon as it can be done with *any degree* of propriety; for, be assured, Sir, that a man so devoid of principle as he is, to be guilty, not only of the barefaced frauds with which he is accused, but the abominable Sin of ingratitude, will neglect no opportunity of converting to his own use, when he can do it with impunity, every species of property that is committed to his care, and will do it the more readily after his reputation will have suffered, than before—The most hardened villain, altho' he Sins without remorse, wishes to cloak his iniquity—if possible under specious and

[1] The reply of Jones, printed in *Letters of Joseph Jones*, 97, is very important, as it was the letter that was read at the meeting of the officers called by the Newburg addresses.

[*mutilated*] but when character is no more, he bids defiance to the opinions of Mankind, and is under no other restraint than that of the Law, and the punishments it inflicts. Posey, I am persuaded, will be no exception to this rule—and that the sooner the Estate can be taken out of his hands the less it will suffer—as it cannot be in worse.—

With respect to the valuation of the Stock, if upon an investigation of the matter, and comparing it with the Scale of depreciation as settled by Congress, it shall be found, when reduced to specie value, that the sum amounts to more than the number and kind of cattle had of me are worth, let a just value be placed on them, and it will meet my entire approbation. Mr. Custis, as I wrote him, was alarmed at the *nominal*, without attending to the *real* price of the stock—for if 20 paper Dollars in those days, was valued at, and would purchase no more than one Silver D[ollar] valuing any article at £6 Currency, was neither more nor less than fixing it at a Dollar specie—If therefore the valuation of Colo. Bassett when estimated by this rule, and fixed upon this principle, is not too high, there certainly can be no cause of complaint; and upon this footing I am willing to place the matter—A Dollar in specie may be a hundred pounds according to the scale of depreciation, but if no man will give more than Six shillings for it, that sum is most certainly the intrinsic worth of it. It never was, nor is it now my intention to put the Estate of Mr. Custis to the least inconvenience to pay the Debt it owes me. On the contrary, if I

ever get it at all, to receive it at such a time and in such a manner as to occasion the least possible distress is all I aim at. Therefore, as it seemed to be your opinion and it was clearly mine, that the stud, and other Horses belonging to that Estate (which were not wanted for immediate use) had better be sold—and as I really wanted one, and could have made it very convenient to have taken both of his covering Horses, I directed Mr. Lund Washington to get them in discount of my Debt; but if I can obtain nothing without advancing the money, as an indifferent purchaser, I shall certainly decline this mode of gratifying my wants, as I have no more idea of advancing money (in truth I have it not to advance) to an estate that owes it to me, than I have of demanding it from one that cannot, with convenience pay it. If therefore you cannot let me have one of the stud horses upon the above terms, I must not only do without *him*, but any *other* as I have not the means of purchasing.

The French Army have Embarked at Boston for the West Indies; but had not Sailed when I heard last from that Quarter—Lord Howe has relieved Gibraltar—The French have taken and destroyed the British Interest in Hudson's Bay, to the Amount it is said of 10,000,000 of Livres. The British Fleet have left New York in two divisions, and a detachment of Troops it is reported are going from that place to the West Indies; but when they will embark is uncertain. A number of Transports are collected there but I believe they are only waiting for decisive

orders from their Court; which in my judgment would not Issue till after the meeting of Parliament, when the Parties for and against the American War will try their strength. We shall then know whether we are [*mutilated*] under our Vine and fig Trees in Peace, or prosecute the War.

It gives me much pleasure to hear that your good Mother, yourself, Mrs Dandridge, and Family, are well. My affectionate regards are presented to them all, in which your Sister, who arrived here the 30th of last month, joins. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
18 December, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

By the Southern Mail of last Week I received your Letter of the 4th of Octr. enclosing the Returns of your Army: and I am just now favored with that of the 11th of Octr. covering the Returns for the month of Octr.: as I find by the latter, you had recd. mine of the 23d of Septr., I can have no occasion to suggest anything farther at this time respecting the disposition of the Troops after the Enemy shall have abandoned the Southern States—the latitude already given, will in a sufficient manner I believe, enable you to act for the public good, as the state of affairs may then seem to demand.

There has been during the Summer much speculalation & many conjectures that New York would be

evacuated before Winter, as I informed you in my last letter which was dated the 18th of Octr. but at the same time I mentioned "I had no such idea;" and the event has justified my opinion.—I am not without expectations, however, that a detachment will be made in the course of the Winter to the West Indies: indeed many appearances strongly indicate this, or at least, that some orders of embarkation are expected, such as the great preparation of Transports there being now about 120, collected from various quarters, lying in the east River compleatly fitted for sea—and Reports still continue to assert that several thousand British Troops will yet be detached.

The sailing of the Fleet from New York in two divisions, I suppose must have been well known in Carolina; as in all probability the last squadron served to convoy a part of the Garrison of Charles Town to the W. Indies agreeably to your expectation—But I imagine you could not have learned, (it having been a secret to this time which it was not prudent to commit to paper) that the Orders of the Court of Versailles to the Count de Rochambeau, (who is himself about to sail for France) were that the Corps under his orders should go to the West Indies, in case the evacuation of New York or Charles Town should take place—In expectation that the latter would happen, the French Army marched into the eastern States, towards the last of Octr., under pretext of taking Winter Quarters there, but in fact, with the design of embarking on board the Fleet of M. the Marquis de Vaudrieul at Boston; whenever

the event on which their ultimate movement depended, became sufficiently ascertained. From the general concurrence of intelligence & a variety of circumstances the Enemy's intention to leave Charles Town has approached so near to a certainty, that all the Army of His Most Christn. Majesty (excepting the Legion of Lauzun which remains behind) have embarked, and are to sail in two days from this time —As soon as this Fleet is clear of the Coast, & the destination of the Troops shall be positively known at N. York, (as I observed before) it appears not improbable a considerable Corps of British will be sent to Jamaica; for the safety of which Island the apprehensions of the Enemy appear to be very much alarmed, on account of the large force at the Havanna & the arrival of the Marquis de Bouilli with a reinforcemt. from France—How far the Combined Powers will in reality prosecute a serious operation in that quarter, since the failure of the attempt against Gibraltar; (of the relief of which by the Fleet under Lord Howe you will I dare say have heard before this reaches you) or how far the last mentioned circumstance will tend to hasten or retard a general Pacification, I cannot undertake to determine with certainty. Many Politicians imagine that the fewer capital advantages either of the Belligerent Powers in Europe has over the other, the smaller will be the obstacles that will present themselves in the course of the negociation for Peace—but almost everything respecting this business in my opinion, will rather depend on the strength or weakness of Shelburne's & Fox's Parties in the British Parliament.

To wait Events, & profit by the occasions which may occur, I have concentred the Army to a point as much as possible.—At West Point and the Cantonment 4 miles from this place is our whole force, except the Rhode Island Regt. at the Northws. & one or two Corps on the Lines—this Army indeed is not numerous, but the efficient strength is greater in proportion to the total numbers, than ever it has been ; the Troops are tolerably well appointed, and have improved very much in their discipline during the last Campaign. The Enemy's regular Force in New York I compute to be between ten & eleven thousand.—Should they weaken themselves by a detachment of 4 or 5000 men & still attempt to hold that Garrison another Campaign, it would be an indelible blot to the reputation of this Country, not to furnish sufficient means for enabling us to expel them from the Continent.—And yet I am free to confess, I have accustomed myself not to be over sanguine in any of my calculations, especially when I consider the want of energy in government, & the want of that disposition in too many of the People, which once influenced them chearfully to yield a part to defend the remainder of their property.

Thus, my dear Sir, have I given for your own private satisfaction, a pretty general detail of the affairs of our Allies, ourselves, & our Enemies in this part of the Continent.—Hoping & expecting the Southern States will be restored to perfect tranquility before this is delivered to you, I have only to add that Mrs. Washington joins me in requesting Mrs.

Greene & yourself to accept our best wishes & Compliments—it will ever give me pleasure to hear from you on matters of business or friendship, being with sentiments of perfect esteem & regard &c.

I am &c.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

NEWBURG, 8 January, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

The last Post brought me your favor of the 26th ulto., covering Doctor Smith's Draft of the 23d for Fifty Guineas. I am obliged to you for paying the money, and charging it to the account mentioned; altho' I was provided for the demand and should have paid the Bill at Sight.

I have lately purchased a piece of Land near Alexandria at the price of £2000 Virginia Curry. with a view to exchange it for a small Tract in the centre of the one in which my Seat is—a tract I have been twenty years endeavoring to obtain with little or no prospect of success before. To enable me to pay for it, I have borrowed the money in this State (of the Governor), and expected to have answered the Bills at this place; till by yesterday's Post I was informed by my Agent Mr. Lund Washington, that the money was to be paid in Philadelphia; and that Mr. Robert Adam & Co. of Alexandria (who have the Bills upon me,) were to set out in a few days to receive the money. Under these circumstances, permit me to ask, if you can make it convenient, in the course of business, to pay the sum of Eighteen hun-

dred and Eighty pounds Virga. Curry. in Specie dollars at Six Shillings, in Philadelphia and receive the like sum in specie (which I have by me) here? If you can, the Inclosed Letter to Mr. Robt. Adam may be delivered. If you cannot, be so good as to return or destroy it. I beg leave to suggest that the specie I have is unclipped, consequently if I could pay it here by weight I should be no looser; but, rather than disappoint those who expect to receive the money in Philadelphia I would pay it to your order if you answer the Bills upon me at that place —by tale & abide the loss.

The distresses to which I know you have been driven from the numerous calls upon you, for money without adequate funds to answer them, have ever been a restraint upon my applications for the most necessary purposes. Perhaps I may have carried it to a criminal length with respect to secret Services; because, rather than add to your embarrassments by my demands, I have submitted to grope in the dark without those certain and precise informations which every man at the head of an army ought, and the public Interest requires he should have, and this maugre the aid of my private purse and other funds which were not applicable to this essentially necessary purpose. Having given you this information I shall only add that, if it is in your power to afford me assistance it will come very opportunely. If it is not, —I am where I am.

I shall be obliged to you (the Secretary at War having passed this place before the plan which you

and he had determined upon for the Issues for the present year arrived) to inform me why and upon what principle the regulation respecting the Sixteenth Ration for the women of the Army was made?

I have no doubt of a perfect agreement between the Army and the present Contractors; nor of the advantages which will flow from the consequent harmony. Sure I am, the Army will ask no more of the Contractors than their indubitable rights; and I am persuaded there is too much liberality and good sense in the latter to descend to the *low dirty* tricks which were practiced in the time of Comfort Sands, whose want of liberality—I will go further, and say lack of common honesty—defeated his favorite scheme of making money, which appears to be the only object he had in view.

It is unnecessary for me I hope to add, in answer to your favor of the 19th ulto., that every support in my power towards carrying your schemes of economy into effect shall be rendered most chearfully—as will any assistance I can give towards promoting your plan of revenue. Altho' I am sorry to observe there does not appear to be the best disposition in some States to second your views.

Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful & affectionate compliments to Mrs. Morris and yourself, and best wishes for the return of many happy New Years. The advanced Season and prospect of bad weather induced her to take the most direct Road to this place; otherwise she would have had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Morris in Philadelphia.

With great truth, &c.

TO TENCH TILGHMAN.

NEWBURG, 10 January, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been favored with your letters of the 22d & 24th of last month from Philadelphia; and thank you for the trouble you have had with my small commissions.—I have sent Mr. Rittenhouse the glass of such spectacles as suit my eyes, that he may know how to grind his Christals.

Neither Duportail nor Gouvion are arrived at this place.—To the latter, I am refered by the Marqs. la Fayette for some matters which he did not chuse to commit to writing.[1]—The sentim'nt however which he has delivered (with respect to the negociations for Peace) accord precisely with the ideas I have entertained of this business ever since the secession of Mr. Fox, viz—that no peace would be concluded before the meeting of the British parliament.—And that, if it did not take place within a month afterwards, we might lay our acc't for one more Campaign—*at least.*

The obstinacy of the King, and his unwillingness to acknowledge the Independence of the Country, I have ever considered as the greatest obstacles in the way of a Peace. Lord Shelburne, who is not only at the head of the Administration, but has been introducing others of similar sentiments to his own, has declared, that nothing but dire necessity should ever force the measure. Of this necessity, men will entertain different opinions. Mr. Fox, it seems, thought the period had arrived some time ago; and

[1] Lafayette had written, June 25, 1782, to Livingston, giving his sentiments on the negotiations for peace.—*Diplomatic Correspondence.*

yet the Peace is not made—nor will it, I conceive, if the influence of the Crown can draw forth fresh supplies from the Nation, for the purpose of carrying on the War. By the meeting of Parliament, Lord Shelburne would have been able to ascertain two things—first, the best terms on which G. Britain could obtain Peace.—Secondly, the ground on which he himself stood.—If he found it slippery, and that the voice of the people was for pacific measures; he would then, have informed the Parliament that, after many months spent in negociation,—such were the best terms he could obtain;—and that the alternative of accepting them,—or preparing vigorously for the prosecution of the War, was submitted to their consideration (being an extraordinary case) and decision. A little time therefore, if I have formed a just opinion of the matter, will disclose the result of it. Consequently, we shall either soon have Peace, or not the most agreeable prospect of War, before us—as it appears evident to me, that the States *generally*, are sunk into the most profound lethargy, while some of them are running *quite* retrograde.

The King of G. B. by his letters Patent, (which I have seen) has authorized Mr. Oswald to treat with any Commissioner or Com'rs from the United States of America, who shall appear with proper powers. This, certainly, is a capital point gained. It is at least breaking ground on *their* part, and I dare say proved a bitter pill to Royalty; that, it was indispensably necessary to answer one of the points above mentioned, as the American Commissioners

would enter in *no business* with Mr. Oswald till his Powers were made to suit their purposes. Upon the whole, I am fixed in an opinion that Peace, or a pretty long continuance of the War, will have been determined before the adjournment for the Hollidays; and as it will be the middle or last of February before we shall know the result, time will pass heavily on in this dreary mansion—where we are, at present fast locked in frost and snow.—[1]

Nothing new has happened in this quarter since you left it, except the abuse of me in a New York

[1] "Ever since the Secession of Mr. Fox and others from the administration, I have been decidedly of opinion, that Peace would not take place before that epoch; that it would depend upon the strength of the contending parties and their influence on the nation, whether it would then happen or not; and that the intermediate space would be employed in Intriguing, in an investigation of powers, in hearing propositions, and probing the intentions of one another to the bottom. These I suppose would have been pretty well understood on all sides by the 26th of Novr. (as the ground on which Lord Shelburne is placed also would). It followed, then, in my judgment, that the ministry wd. communicate to, and take the sense of Parliament on the terms upon which Peace could be obtained; and leave it with the nation to accept them, or furnish the means of prosecuting the war vigorously. The Power given to Mr. Oswald, to treat with any Commissioner or Commissioners properly authorized from the United States of America, is more than I expected wd. happen before the meeting of Parliament. But, as the Gentlemen on the part of America could not treat with Him unless such powers were given, it became an act of necessity to cede them to effect their other purposes. Thus I account for the indirect acknowledgment of our Independence by the King, who, I dare say, felt some severe pangs at the time he put his hand to the Letters Patent. It is not, however, less efficacious or pleasing on that account; and breaking the Ice is a great point gained. There can be but very little doubt, I believe, of the conclusn. of the commercial treaty with Holland; but I have apprehensions that that Power will be the most difficult to satisfy at the general Treaty of Peace.

"It is with great pain I hear of the repeal of the Impost Law in Virginia. What could induce it? What office is Mr. Jefferson appointed to, that he has, you say, lately accepted? If it is that of commissioner of peace, I hope he will arrive too late to have any hand in it.—*Washington to Robert R. Livingston*, 8 January, 1783.

Paper for having given *false information* to the Count de Vergennes, which (says the writer) was the occasion of the insinuation in *his Letter to me* of a want of British Justice. I have not seen the Paper but am told the author of the piece is quite in a passion at my want of ingenuity, and ascribes the release of Captn. Asgill to a *peremptory order* from the Court of France (in whose service he places me,) notwithstanding the soft and complaisant language of the French Minister's Letter.

Mrs. Washington has received the Shoes you ordered for her, and thanks you for your attention to her request—I receive with great sensibility and pleasure your assurances of affection and regard. It would be but a renewal of what I have often repeated to you, that there are few men in the world to whom I am more attached by inclination than I am to you. With the Cause, I hope—most devoutly hope—there will soon be an end to my Military Services, when, as our places of residence will not be far apart, I shall never be more happy than in your Company at Mt. Vernon. I shall always be glad to hear from, and keep up a corrispondence with you.—

Mrs. Washington joins me in every wish that can tend to your happiness—Humphreys and Walker, who are the only Gentlemen of the Family that are with me at present—will speak for themselves.—If this finds you at Baltimore, I pray my respects to Mr. Carroll and Family.—With the greatest esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO BUSHROD WASHINGTON.[1]

NEWBURG, 15 January, 1783.

DEAR BUSHROD,

You will be surprised, perhaps, at receiving a letter from me; but if the end is answered for which it is written, I shall not think my time misspent. Your father, who seems to entertain a very favorable opinion of your prudence, and I hope you merit it, in one or two of his letters to me speaks of the difficulty he is under to make you remittances. Whether this arises from the scantiness of his funds, or the extensiveness of your demands, is matter of conjecture with me. I hope it is not the latter; because common prudence, and every other consideration, which ought to have weight in a reflecting mind, is opposed to your requiring more than his conveniency, and a regard to his other children will enable him to pay; and because he holds up no idea in his Letter, which would support me in the conclusion. Yet when I take a view of the inexperience of youth, the temptations in and vices of cities, and the distresses to which our Virginia gentlemen are driven by an accumulation of Taxes and the want of a market, I am almost inclined to ascribe it in part to both. Therefore, as a friend, I give you the following advice.

Let the object, which carried you to Philadelphia, be always before your Eyes. Remember, that it is not the mere study of the Law, but to become emi-

[1] The favorite nephew of General Washington, to whom he left the estate at Mount Vernon, and who was for many years one of the associate justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

nent in the profession of it, which is to yield honor and profit. The first was your choice; let the second be your ambition, and that dissipation is incompatible with both; that the Company, in which you will improve most, will be least expensive to you; and yet I am not such a Stoic as to suppose that you will, or to think it right that you should, always be in Company with senators and philosophers; but of the young and juvenile kind let me advise you to be choice. It is easy to make acquaintances, but very difficult to shake them off, however irksome and unprofitable they are found, after we have once committed ourselves to them. The indiscretions and scrapes, which very often they involuntarily lead one into, prove equally distressing and disgraceful.

Be courteous to all, but intimate with few; and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence. True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation.

Let your *heart* feel for the afflictions and distresses of every one, and let your *hand* give in proportion to your purse; remembering always the estimation of the widow's mite, but, that it is not every one who asketh that deserveth charity; all, however, are worthy of the inquiry, or the deserving may suffer.

Do not conceive that fine clothes make fine men any more than fine feathers make fine Birds. A plain genteel dress is more admired, and obtains more credit than lace and embroidery, in the Eyes of the judicious and sensible.

The last thing, which I shall mention, is first in

importance; and that is, to avoid Gaming. This is a vice which is productive of every possible evil; equally injurious to the morals and health of its votaries. It is the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity, and father of mischief. It has been the ruin of many worthy familys, the loss of many a man's honor, and the cause of Suicide. To all those who enter the lists, it is equally fascinating. The successful gamester pushes his good fortune, till it is overtaken by a reverse. The losing gamester, in hopes of retrieving past misfortunes, goes on from bad to worse, till grown desperate he pushes at everything and loses his all. In a word, few gain by this abominable practice, (the profit if any being diffused) while thousands are injured.

Perhaps you will say, "My conduct has anticipated the advice," and "Not one of these cases applies to me." I shall be heartily glad of it. It will add not a little to my happiness, to find those to whom I am nearly connected pursuing the right walk of life. It will be the sure road to my favor, and to those honors and places of profit, which their Country can bestow; as merit rarely goes unrewarded. I am, dear Bushrod, your affectionate uncle.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

NEWBURGH, 16 January, 1783.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Since the letter which Bushrod delivered to me in Philadelphia, I have received your favors of the 24th of July from Westmoreland, and 12th of Novr. from Berkley.

The latter gave me extreme pain. In God's name, how did my brother Samuel contrive to get himself so enormously in debt? Was it by making purchases? By misfortunes? or sheer indolence and inattention to business? From whatever cause it proceeded, the matter is now the same, and curiosity only prompts me to the enquiry, as it does to know what will be saved, and how it is disposed of. In the list of his debts, did it appear that I had a claim upon him for the purchase money of the land I sold to Pendleton on Bullskin? I have never received a farthing for it yet, and think I have been informed by him, that he was to pay it.

I have heard a favorable account of Bushrod, and doubt not but his prudence will direct him to a proper line of conduct; I have given him my sentiments on this head, and persuade myself that with the advice of Mr. Wilson, to whose friendship, as well as instruction in his profession, I recommended him; and the admonition of others: he will stand as good a chance as most youth of his age, to avoid the vices of large cities, which have their advantages and disadvantages in fitting a man for the great theater of public life.

I have lately received a letter from my mother, in which she complains much of the knavery of the overseer at the Little Falls quarter. She says she can get nothing from him. It is pretty evident, I believe, that I get nothing from thence, while I have the annual rent of between eighty and an hundred pounds to pay. The whole profit of the plantation,

according to her account, is applied to his own use; which is hard upon me, as I had no earthly inducement to meddle with it, but to comply with her wish and to free her from care. This, like every other matter of private concern to me, has been totally neglected; but it is too much, while I am suffering in every other way (and hardly able to keep my own estate from sale) to be saddled with all the expence of hers, and not be able to derive the smallest return from it. She has requested that I should get somebody to attend to it: I must therefore ask the favor of you, to take it under your care. I know of none in whose hands it can be better placed; none to whom it will be less inconvenient; and who is more interested in the good management of the land. For as it lies directly in your rout to Berkley, and in the neighborhood of our friends, where you must always make a halt, it will give you very little additional trouble to provide an overseer; call upon him as you pass and repass, and settle annual accounts with him, by which means I shall have some knowledge of his transactions, and a certainty that whatever is made will go towards payment of the rent. I shall by this post inform my mother of this application to you, hoping you will find no difficulty in the undertaking.

While I am talking of my mother and her concerns, I am impelled to mention some things which have given, and still continue to give me pain. About two years ago, a gentleman of my acquaintance[1] informed me, that it was in contemplation, to move for

[1] Benj. Harrison. *See* Vol. IX., p. 182.

a pension for her in the Virginia Assembly; that he did not suppose I knew of the measure proposed; and that he did not believe it would be very agreeable to me to have it done; but wished, however, to know my sentiments thereon. I instantly wrote him, that it was new and astonishing to me, and begged that he would prevent the motion if possible; or oppose it, if made; for I was sure she had not a child that would not be hurt at the idea of her becoming a pensioner—or in other words, receiving *charity* from the public. Since then I have heard nothing of *that* matter; but learn from very good authority, that she is, upon all occasions and in all companies, complaining of the hardness of the times, of her wants and difficulties; and if not in direct terms, at least by strong innuendoes, endeavors to excite a belief that times are much altered, &c., &c., which not only makes *her* appear in an unfavorable point of view, but *those also* who are connected with her. That she can have no *real* wants, that may not easily be supplied, I am sure of. *Imaginary* wants are indefinite; and oftentimes insatiable; because they sometimes are boundless, and always changing. The reason of my mentioning these matters, is that you may enquire into her real wants, and see what is necessary to make her comfortable. If the rent is insufficient to do this, while I have anything, I will part with it to make her so; and wish you to take measures in my behalf accordingly. At the same time, I wish you to represent to her in delicate terms, the impropriety of her complaints, and *acceptance* of

favors, even where they are voluntarily offered, from any but relations. It will not do to touch upon this subject in a letter to her, and therefore I have avoided it.

I do not believe that Sir Guy Carleton gives countenance to those dirty picaroons that infest your rivers. If they are encouraged at all, it must be by the Admiral, in whose element they are; but I am rather inclined to think that they are navigated by a lawless banditti, who would rob both sides with equal facility, if they could do it with equal impunity.

With respect to Peace, we are held in a very disagreeable state of suspence, and shall remain in it, I expect, 'till some time in February. My opinion of it, however, has been uniformly the same since the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, and succession of Mr. Fox. It is, that nothing would be concluded 'till the meeting of the British Parliament in November, and if the influence of the Crown could prevent it, that it would not take place even then, if the independence of this country is to be a consequence of it. That previous to the session, the negotiation from the Court of Britain would be employed in intriguing, in an investigation of powers, hearing propositions, and probing the intentions and expectations of the belligerent powers, to the bottom. The latter being accomplished, Lord Shelburne, if he found himself standing upon slippery ground, or that the voice of the people was loud for peace, would say to Parliament: that after many months spent in negotiation, here are the best terms we can obtain; and, as they

involve consequences of great national concern, and have been the subject of seven years war and debate, it is fitting that Parliament should decide on them, and either accept them, or prepare vigorously for the prosecution of the war. This would put the matter upon a broad basis, remove responsibility from his door, and blunt the edge of opposition, which otherwise I am persuaded will be found to be very keen. The King having by his letters patent (which I have seen) authorised Mr. Oswald to treat with any commissioner or commissioners from the *United States* of America, vested with proper powers, is certainly a great point gained; but it was unavoidable on their part, and *our* commissioners refused to enter upon *any* business with Mr. Oswald without. And the minister dared not to meet the Parliament without having attempted something under the Peace Bill which passed the session before. Upon the whole, I am of opinion that the terms of Peace were agreed upon before the adjournment for the Christmas holidays, or that we shall have at *least* another campaign. How well the States have provided for the continuance of the war, let their acts and their policy answer. The army as usual is without pay, and a great part of the soldiery without shirts; and tho' the patience of them is equally threadbare, it seems to be a matter of small concern to those at a distance. In truth, if one was to hazard an opinion for them on this subject, it would be, that the army having contracted a habit of encountering distress and difficulties, and of living without money, it would be injurious to it, to intro-

duce other customs. We have, however, (but this depended upon ourselves) built the most comfortable barracks in the vicinity of this place (wch. is near Wt. Point) that the troops have ever yet been in.

I was very sorry to find that my sister was in bad health. I suppose you are to be congratulated on your gouty fit. My love, in which Mrs. Washington joins, is offered to you both and the rest of the family. Compliments to all friends.

TO SAMUEL OGDEN.

NEWBURG, 19 January, 1783.

SIR,

In every conversation which I have had with you, on the subject of your letters of the 31st of last month, and 15th inst., I was pointed, because I meant to deal candidly, in assuring you, it was not my intention to interest myself in behalf of any particular characters, that my motives were altogether public, and that if I could not take the business up upon the broadest basis, and while a defection on the part of the refugees would be productive of advantages to the American cause, I would have no concern with it.

I am sorry to observe to you, that there appears to me to be a delay on the part of the refugees or loyalists, which is to be ascribed more to design than to necessity. It seems as if the object with them was to get at the ultimatum of Great Britain, before any decided steps should be taken with the country they have abandoned. This, sir, you will do me the jus-

tice to acknowledge, is not only incompatible with my ideas, but to my express declaration to you :—for the foundation on which I meant to build, and the *only* one upon which I could attempt to include and recommend obnoxious characters, was their decision and influence ; and the consequent advantages, while the intention of the enemy should be suspended and unknown.

The matter has already been near three months in agitation, and for aught that has come to my knowledge, is yet in statu quo. One month, perhaps, a few days *now*, will unfold the designs of the British cabinet, or rather those of the Parliament. Let me ask then, if these be to prosecute the war vigorously, will the gentlemen of that class, in whose behalf you particularly interest yourself (after their address to the king of Great Britain, which I have lately seen) give any aid to this country ? If the determination is in favor of peace, and peace takes place on the terms which are expected, will not their inveterate obstinacy and procrastination, put it out of the power of any man, to adduce an argument in their favor ?

I confess to you, Sir, their policy strikes me in so unfavorable a point of view, that I no longer find an inclination to have any further agency in the business ; for I am convinced from their address, and other circumstances, that they will never turn their faces towards this country until the back of Great Britain is turn'd upon them. And that their delay proceeds from no other cause than an intention to await the event of their application in another quarter.

I have only to add that I am the more confirmed in this opinion, upon observing that there is no idea held up in the copy of your brother's letter of the 3d of December (the original of which never came to my hands,) or in any of the subsequent ones, which gives the smallest insight into the business; or that will support me in any deduction favorable to it; the former of which is expressly contrary to the information I received from you at our last interview, as the letter from your brother to you (which was to pass through my hands) was to be couched in such terms, as I should understand, tho' unintelligible to others, who should be unacquainted with the business. Your own letter of the 31st, committed to the care of Mr. Morris, was brought here a few days ago *only*, by a common soldier, who delivered it at the office and retired before I had read, and could enquire how he came by it, nor do I know at this hour. Upon the maturest consideration, Sir, I have so fully made up my judgment on this subject, that I could wish never to hear any thing farther upon it. I am, sir, &c.

TO MAJOR THOMAS LANSDALE.

NEWBURG, 25 January, 1783.

SIR:

I was hurt yesterday at the appearance of the Detachment under your Command, as I conceive you must have been, if you viewed and drew a comparison between it and the Regiment on your Left. The

Clothes of the latter have been upon the Soldiers backs almost, if not quite, twelve months,—while it is scarce Six since any part of yours has been issued.

Dirt and Trash too, of every denomination was so liberally strewed, even upon your parade, and immediately before the doors of your Hutts, that it was difficult to avoid the Filth.

The true distinction, Sir, between what is called a fine Regiment, and an indifferent one will ever, upon investigation, be found to originate in, and depend upon the care, or the inattention, of the Officers belonging to them.—That Regiment whose Officers are watchful of their men, and attentive to their wants, who will see that proper use is made, and a proper account taken, of whatever is drawn for them; and that Regimental and Company Inspections are frequent in order to examine into the state of their Arms, ammunition, Clothing, and other necessaries, to prevent loss or embezzlement;—who will see that the Soldiers Clothes are well made, kept whole, and clean; that their Hutts are swept and purified; that the Trash, and all kinds of Offal is either burnt or buried; that Vaults or proper necessaries are erected and every person punished who shall on those occasions go elsewhere in the Camp; that their Provision is in good order well cooked and eat at proper hours; —those Officers, I say, who attend to these things—and their duty strictly enjoins it on them—give health, comfort, and a Military pride to their Men, which fires and fits them for every thing great and noble. It is by this means the character of

a Regiment is exalted while sloth, inattention, and neglect produce the reverse of these in every particular and must infallibly lessen the reputation of the Corps.

I observed with concern that none of your officers had espontoons; that some of them were even without side arms; and of those that had, some were so remiss in their duty as not to know they were to salute with them. From these considerations I am led to point you to the Genl. Orders of the 9th of August and 1st of September, and to recommend in pointed terms to your Officers the necessity and advantage of making themselves perfectly masters of the Printed "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States." Ignorance of them cannot, nor will it be any excuse, while it may bring disgrace on the Corps they belong to and produce much confusion in the army if they should form and manœuvre with it.—

As it is the first time I have seen them under Arms, and some allowance is to be made for the rawness of the Corps, I will substitute admonition in place of reprehension—but it is my desire that you should inform the officers I shall expect to see a very great alteration in the police of the Corps and appearance of the Men before the next Inspection.

The Soldiers of your detachment, with a few exceptions, would look very well in the line of the Army if their Clothes were in good order, well fitted, and the Men made to appear neat and clean. I am, &c.

TO ELIAS BOUDINOT, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
30 January, 1783.

SIR,

I should not have undertaken at this time to address myself through Your Excellency to Congress, on the present state of our Military and Political affairs, (which are so blended as scarcely to admit of seperation in the discussion,) did I not apprehend that my silence might perhaps be construed into remissness in my official duties or inattention to the public interests, and that some inconveniences might be experienced by the neglect or delay. Influenced by these motives, and an ardent desire to carry the wishes of Congress into effect, I shall hope to be excused, after suggesting a few things, for entreating to be made acquainted, so far as may be deemed expedient, with their sentiments and expectations relative to our Future Operations.

It scarcely needs be remarked here, as it is a fact of great notoriety, that the tranquillity, leisure, and inactivity of Winter-Quarters have ever been considered by all well informed warlike nations, when in a state of Hostility, as the only proper Season for taking into contemplation the probable operations of the ensuing Campaign, and for making the best arrangements in their power for carrying such projects as were finally determined upon into execution. It

[1] Mr. Boudinot was elected President of Congress on the 4th of November. After the departments of finance, war, and foreign affairs went into operation, the correspondence of the Commander-in-chief with Congress passed chiefly through the hands of the secretaries, and his letters were directed to them.

was not simply in conformity with this practice, but upon a perfect conviction of the propriety and expediency of it, that at the close of all my former campaigns I have thought myself not only warranted, but impelled by the strongest dictates of reason and duty, to exert all my influence and abilities in endeavoring to augment our force, and to make the greatest possible provision in every Department for enabling us to act with vigor at the opening of the next Campaign; and, in thus attempting to perform my duty, I derived no small share of satisfaction from a consciousness, that I should meet with the approbation and assistance of my Country; being at the same time so fully acquainted with the designs of the Enemy on the one hand, and with the inclinations of Congress on the other, that I could not hesitate a moment in my own mind to decide what general system of measures was proper to be adopted. But, as the complexion of our Political and Military Affairs is now entirely changed by the Negotiations for Peace, which are carrying on in Europe; as Congress have determined by the reduction which has lately taken place, that the number of men engaged on the present Establishment are adequate to the Services before us; and as that Honble. Body have much better opportunities, than any Individual can have, for collecting and comparing the intelligence necessary to judge, with a degree of certainty, whether Peace will be concluded in the course of the Winter, so as to supersede the necessity of any further military preparations; I could not think myself at liberty,

without having recourse to their sentiments, to take the same measures and give the same orders, that I had on all former occasions deemed myself competent to do. On the contrary, I feared to delay any longer to express my apprehensions, that very fair opportunities might be lost, and that very great, if not irreparable injuries might be experienced (if the war should be continued, especially if it should begin to rage again), in case we should not also on our part be in a state of preparation for such an event.

In addition to every other consideration of a Foreign, a Military, or Political nature, the embarrassed state of our Finances, the necessity of using the strictest œconomy and preventing every unnecessary expenditure of public money in conducting our Military affairs, have in an especial manner prompted me to make this representation, that the Sovereign power may determine, what is the proper line of conduct to be pursued under our present circumstances; whether any and what preparations ought to be made during the Winter; and what our situation will be at the period proper for opening the Campaign (supposing the war should continue and require any offensive operations on our part), unless many of the *essential articles* which are wanting, particularly in the Quarter Master's Department, should in the mean time be effectually and fully supplied. Amongst the most indispensable and yet most expensive of which, I must beg leave to mention the means of Transportation, Horses for Artillery, and Teams and Wheel-Carriages for Ordnance, Stores, and Baggage;

without which, it is well known, an army becomes totally harmless and totally helpless; for, so far from being able to annoy and operate against its Enemy, it is neither able to take the Field, nor to advance or retire a single step, let the occasions or prospects be of a nature ever so pressing and important.

Notwithstanding any of the foregoing observations, I hope it will be clearly understood, that it is very far from being my wish or desire, that our Military preparations should be increased in the smallest degree beyond what the exigence of the Circumstances may appear to demand. But, while I candidly confess, that I believe there is no man, who more earnestly wishes a speedy period may be put to the contest than myself, I must take the liberty to suggest, whether, (in case a peace should not take place in consequence of the present negotiations,) it would not be far more eligible in point of national policy and œconomy to attempt, by one great and decisive effort, to expel the Enemy from the remaining part of their possessions in the United States, than to suffer them with their enfeebled force to hold a Post and protract the war, until the accumulating expenses of our languid and defensive measures only shall amount to such an aggregate sum, as would have furnished the means of attempting the Siege of New York with a prospect of success?

In order that your Excellency and Congress may have as comprehensive and compleat view of our efficient force, our military apparatus, and the princi-

pal articles, which would be required for a vigorous Campaign, I have thought it expedient to forward the Enclosed Returns and estimates (the Estimate of the Engineer being omitted, because the articles in his department will be principally provided by the labors of the army); and I flatter myself it will be found, that the troops under my orders are at this moment as much collected and as well appointed, as could possibly be expected under our circumstances; and that all the means, which have been afforded, so far as depended on military arrangements, have been œconomized in the most prudent manner. I wait with great solicitude to hear the sentiments, expectations, and final pleasure of Congress, on the several points contained in this letter; and, in the mean time,

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] This letter was referred, 11 February, to a committee composed of Hamilton, Peters, Bland, Rutledge, and Mifflin. In consequence of their report, the following resolves were adopted.

"That the Commander-in-chief be informed, that Congress, always happy to receive his sentiments either on the political or military affairs of these States, the utility of which they have upon so many occasions experienced, have paid all the attention to his letter of the 30th of January, which the importance of it demands.

"That, should the war continue another campaign, every motive of policy and economy would operate in favor of the enterprise suggested; but that, such are the present situation and prospects of these States, that it would be inexpedient at this time to determine upon the plan, or to enter upon the expensive preparations, which it would require.

"That the official accounts received by Congress, corresponding with other intelligence, afford appearances of an approaching peace.

"Ordered that the secretary of foreign affairs make a confidential communication to the Commander-in-chief of the state of the negotiations for peace, when the last advices were received."—*Secret Journal*, vol. i., p. 254.

P. S.

I have directed the Troops of Pensyla., Delaware, Maryland & Virginia except the Legionary Corps to be comprehended in the Qr. Master's Estimate, as they would undoubtedly be employed with this Army in case of any serious operation.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

NEWBURG, 6 February, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you that your Packet for Govr. Greene which came enclosed to me (in your private Letter of the 12th of December) was forwarded in an hour after it came to my hands by a Gentleman returning to Rhode Island (Welcome Arnold, Esq.); there can be no doubt therefore of its having got safe to the Governor.

It is with a pleasure, which friendship only is susceptible of, I congratulate you on the glorious end you have put to hostilities in the Southern States. The honor and advantages of it, I hope and trust you will long live to enjoy. When this hemisphere will be equally free, is yet in the womb of time to discover. A little while, 't is presumed, will disclose the determinations of the British senate with respect to Peace or War, as it seems to be agreed on all hands, that the present Premier, (especially if he should find the opposition powerful,) intends to submit the decision of these matters to Parliament. The Speech, the addresses, and Debates, for which we are looking

in every direction, will give a data, from which the bright rays of the one, or gloomy prospect of the other, may be discovered.

If historiographers should be hardy enough to fill the page of History with the advantages, that have been gained with unequal numbers, (on the part of America) in the course of this contest, and attempt to relate the distressing circumstances under which they have been obtained, it is more than probable, that Posterity will bestow on their labors the epithet and marks of fiction; for it will not be believed, that such a force as Great Britain has employed for eight years in this country could be baffled in their plan of subjugating it, by numbers infinitely less, composed of men oftentimes half starved, always in Rags, without pay, and experiencing at times every species of distress, which human nature is capable of undergoing.

I intended to have wrote you a long letter on sundry matters; but Major Burnet popped in unexpectedly at a time, when I was preparing for the celebration of the day, and was just going to a review of the troops, previous to the *feu de joie*.[1] As he is impatient, from an apprehension that the sleighing failing, and as he can give you the occurrences of this

[1] This day was the anniversary of the signing of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States, and the *feu de joie* was in commemoration of that event. The parole for the day, as entered in the Orderly Book, was "*America and France*"; and the countersigns, "*United*," "*For ever*." The following notice was also published in the general orders. "The Commander-in-chief, who wishes on the return of this auspicious day to diffuse the feelings of gratitude and pleasure as extensively as possible, is pleased to grant a full and free pardon to all military prisoners now in confinement."

quarter more in detail than I have time to do, I will refer you to him. I cannot omit informing you, however, that I let no opportunity slip to inquire after your son George at Princeton, and that it is with pleasure I hear he enjoys good health and is a fine promising boy. Mrs. Washington joins me in most affectionate regard and best wishes for Mrs. Greene and yourself. With great truth and sincerity, and every sentiment of friendship, I am, &c.[1]

TO JOSEPH JONES, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 11 February, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I am about to write you a Letter on a subject equally important and delicate, which may be extensive in its consequences and serious in its nature. I shall confine myself to the recital of what I be-

[1] "Without amusements or avocations I am spending another winter (I hope it will be the last that I shall be kept from returning to domestic life,) amongst these rugged and dreary mountains. I have, however, the satisfaction of seeing the troops better covered, better clothed, and better fed, than they have ever been in any former winter quarters. And this circumstance alone would make any situation tolerable to me. In a little time I hope to turn their duty into an amusement by awakening again the spirit of emulation, & love of military parade and glory, which was so conspicuous the last campaign. I shall expect (as soon as the weather will permit in the Spring) to see the general officers daily on horseback at the head of their commands, teaching them by precept and example every thing that is reputable and glorious in the profession of arms; let me hint in season, I presume you will not choose to be absent, or second in exertion on these occasions to any of your brother officers.

"In the meantime I shall struggle to while away this season in laying a foundation for those things. To-morrow, being the anniversary of the alliance with France, we shall have a military exhibition. There will be a review and feu de joie, and afterwards a cold collation at the new public building."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 5 February, 1783.

lieve to be facts, and leave it with you to make deductions.

The printed remonstrance of Mr. Chittenden and his Council, addressed to the president of Congress and founded upon the resolves of the 5th of December last, contains a favorable recital in their own behalf, of what I suppose to be facts ; but, if my memory serves me, it is an uncandid performance, inasmuch as it keeps out of view an important transaction of theirs, which was consequent of those resolves.[1] Be this as it may, matters seem to be approaching too fast to a disagreeable Issue, for the quiet of my mind. The resolves on one hand, and the remonstrance on the other, (unless it should be annulled by the Legislature at their next meeting, which I do not expect,) seems to leave little room for an amicable decision.

Matters being thus situated, permit me to ask how far, and by what means, coercion is to be extended? The army, I presume, will be the answer to the latter. Circumstances (for no determination whatever after blood is once drawn) alone can prescribe bounds to the former. It has been said, but of this you can judge better than I, that the delegates from the New England States in Congress, or a majority of them, are willing to admit these People into the Federal Union, as an Independent and Sovereign State. Be this as it may, two things I am sure of, viz : that they have a powerful interest in those States, and pursued very politic measures to strengthen and increase it,

[1] The remonstrance here mentioned is published, and the whole subject explained, in *Collections of the Vermont Historical Society*, ii., 315 *et. seq.*

long before I had any knowledge of the matter, and before the tendency of it was seen into or suspected, by granting upon very advantageous terms large Tracts of Land, in which, I am sorry to find, the army in some degree have participated.

Let me next ask, by whom is that district of country principally settled? And of whom is your present army (I do not confine the question to this part of it, but will extend it to the whole) composed? The answers are evident,—New England men. It has been the opinion of some, that the appearance of force would awe these People into submission. If the General Assembly ratifie and confirm what Mr. Chittenden and his Council have done, I shall be of a very different sentiment; and, moreover, that it is not a trifling force that will subdue them, even supposing they do derive no aid from the enemy in Canada; and that it will be a very arduous task indeed, if they should, to say nothing of a diversion, which may and doubtless would be made in their favor from New York, if the war with Great Britain should continue.

The Country is very mountainous, full of Defiles, and extremely strong. The Inhabitants, for the most part, are a hardy race, composed of that kind of People, who are best calculated for soldiers; in truth, who *are* soldiers; for many, many hundreds of them are Deserters from this army, who, having acquired property there, would be desperate in the defence of it, well knowing that they were fighting with Halters about their necks.

It may be asked, if I am acquainted with the sentiments of the army on the subject of this dispute. I readily answer, No, not intimately. It is a matter of too delicate a nature to agitate for the purpose of information. But I have heard many officers of rank and discernment, and have learnt by indirect inquiries that others, express the utmost horror at the very idea of shedding blood in an affair of this sort; comparing it in its consequences, tho' not in its principles, to the quarrel with Great Britain, who thought it was only to hold up the rod and all would be hush! I cannot *at this time* undertake to say, that there would be any difficulty with the army, if it was to be ordered upon this Service, but I should be exceedingly unhappy to see the experiment made. For, besides the reasons before suggested, I believe there would be a great and general unwillingness in it to embrue their hands in the blood of their Brethren. I have to add, that almost at the same instant a number of the printed copies of the remonstrance were disseminated through every part of the army. What effect it will have, I know not. The design is obvious.

I promised in the beginning of this letter, that I should content myself with a simple relation of facts. I shall only lament, therefore, that Congress did not in the commencement of this dispute act decidedly. This matter, as you well know, was much agitated last winter, and a Committee of Congress, with whom I had the honor to be in conference, and of wch. I believe you were one, saw Mr. Chittenden's

letter to me and approved of my writing him an answer to the effect it was given.[1] With great regard, (and in much haste, as Col. Pickering is waiting) I am, &c.

P. S. Altho' there can be no doubt of Congress having received the remonstrance alluded to in this letter, I send, nevertheless, one of the printed copies.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

NEWBURG, 12 February, 1783.

DEAR LUND,

Your letter of the 29th of Jany. came by the last Post,—You do not seem to have considered the force and tendency of the words of yr. letter when you talk of the probability *only* of sending me "the long promised account." "The irregularity of them" is not, you add, "for want of knowledge in keeping them, but neglect, your aversion to writing," &c. &c. These are but other words for saying, "as I am not fond of writing, and it is *quite* immaterial whether you have any knowledge or information of your private concerns or whether the accts. are kept properly or no, I have delayed, and do not know how much longer I may continue to delay bringing

[1] See the letter to Mr. Chittenden, dated January 1st, 1782.

The effect of that letter is thus described in Allen's *History of Vermont.*

"The universal confidence that the people of America placed in their Commander-in-chief, from the firm, steady, persevering, and able manner he had conducted the war; his known integrity, wisdom, and virtue, gave him more influence over the legislature of Vermont, than any other man in existence." p. 223.

you acquainted with these accts., irregular as they are."

Delicacy hitherto, and a hope that you long ago would have seen into the propriety of the measure without a hint of it from me, has restrained me from telling you, that annual accounts of my Crops, together with the receipts and expenditure of my Money, State of my stocks, &c., ought to have been sent to me as regularly as the year came about. It is not to be supposed, that all the avocations of my public duties, great and laborious as they have been, could render me totally insensible to the *only means* by which myself and family, and the character I am to maintain in life hereafter, is to be supported; or that a precise account of these matters would not have been exceedingly satisfactory to me. Instead of this, except the accounts rendered at Valley Forge in the year 1778, I have received none since I left home; and not till after two or 3 applications in the course of last year, could I get any accounts of the Crop of the preceding one; and then only of the Corn, by the Post on Sunday last.

I have often told you, and I repeat it with much truth, that the entire confidence which I placed in your integrity made me easy, and I was always happy at thinking that my affairs were in your hands—which I could not have been if they had been under the care of a common manager. But this did not exempt me from the desires which all men have, of knowing the exact state of them. I have now to beg that you will not only send me the account of your receipts and

expenditures of specie, but of every other kind of money subsequent to the account exhibited at Valley Forge, which ended some time in April, 1778. I want to know before I come home (as I shall come home with empty pockets, whenever Peace shall take place) how affairs stand with me, and what my dependence is. I wish to know also what I have to expect from the wheat of 1781 and '82, as you say the two crops are so blended that they cannot be rendered seperately; how are settlements to be made with and justice done to the several Parties Interested under these Circumstances?

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
26 February, 1783.

SIR,

I am sorry to have to acquaint your Excellency, for the information of Congress, that a project, which I had formed for attacking the enemy's post at Oswego, so soon as the sleighing should be good and the ice of the Oneida Lake should have acquired sufficient thickness to admit the passage of the detachment, has miscarried. The report of Colonel Willett, to whom I had entrusted the command of the party (consisting of a part of the Rhode Island regiment, and the State troops of New York, in all about five hundred men), will assign reasons for the disappointment.

Although the expedition has not been attended with success, the officers and soldiers employed on it

are entitled to great credit for the spirit, activity, and patience exhibited by them in the course of the attempt; and, I am certain, nothing that depended upon Colonel Willett to give efficacy to it was wanting.[1]

Major Tallmadge, whom I had placed on the Sound, with the infantry of Sheldon's legion, for the purpose of interrupting as much as possible on that side the trade with New York, has been more successful, as will appear by his report, a copy of which is likewise enclosed. The zeal and activity of Major Tallmadge, and the promptness and bravery of the party acting under his orders on this occasion, have merited and received my thanks.[2] The detachments

[1] The expedition failed through the treachery or ignorance of an Indian guide. Colonel Willett approached with his party in the night within five miles of Fort Oswego, when his principal guide lost his way, and the darkness and extreme fatigue of walking on snow-shoes prevented their discovering the fort, till the morning dawned, and it was necessary to retire. In reply to Colonel Willett's letter reporting the result, General Washington said:

"Unfortunate as the circumstance is, I am happy in the persuasion that no imputation or reflection can justly reach your character, and that you are enabled to draw much consolation from the animated zeal, fortitude, and activity of the officers and soldiers who accompanied you. The failure, it seems, must be attributed to some of those unaccountable events which are not within the control of human means, and which, tho' they often occur in military life, yet require not only the fortitude of the soldier, but the calm reflection of the Philosopher to bear.

"I cannot omit expressing to you the high sense I entertain of your persevering exertions and active zeal on the occasion of this expedition, and begging you to accept my warmest thanks, and that you will be pleased to communicate my gratitude to the officers and men under your command for the share they have taken in that service."—*Washington to Colonel Willett*, 5 March, 1783.

[2] The enemy's armed vessels in the Sound were carrying on and protecting an illicit trade with the inhabitants along the coast. A privateer of this description, mounting eleven carriage-guns and four swivels, was boarded by a party sent by Major Tallmadge in a fast sailing vessel, and after a short but sharp conflict was captured. Major Tallmadge represented the enterprise as conducted with great courage and gallantry on the part of the assailants.

also belonging to the command of Brigadier-General Hazen, which are occasionally advanced to Bergen, Newark, and Elizabethtown, to intercept the illicit commerce in that quarter, appear to have been very alert, and they have succeeded in several instances. I flatter myself Congress will be persuaded, nothing on my part has been omitted to carry fully into execution the resolution of the 30th of October last.[1] But at the same time I am under the necessity to declare, in my own vindication, that, unless the civil powers of the different States will adopt the most energetic measures, and make the greatest exertions to carry them into effect, it will be impossible to put a stop to an evil, which has increased to an alarming height, and which, (notwithstanding all our efforts,) is still increasing, and, I am informed, prevails nowhere in such an uncontrolled manner as on the seacoast of Connecticut. I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] Directing the Commander-in-chief to take the most effectual measures to prevent a clandestine intercourse between New Jersey and the city of New York, by which the enemy were supplied with provisions.

[2] "It is much to be regretted, that, while I am using every means in my power to comply with the orders of Congress, founded in my judgment on our true interest and policy, there should be such a counteraction as we daily experience from individuals. But lamentable indeed is our situation, when States, or the administration of them, are leaping over those bounds, which should ever be deemed the sacred barrier betwn. us and the enemy, without which all opposition to their measures must soon cease, or dwindle into something ridiculous enough.

"That the intercourse with New York by way of the Sound is in a manner without restriction, I have little doubt of; and that the very Boats, which are Armed and Commissioned for the purpose of cutting off the Communication, are employed in facilitating the Trade, I have a recent instance of in one caught by Major Tallmadge in the act and with the goods on board. We have only to persevere, and with the means we possess give all the checks to it in our power. Every officer, who exerts himself in this business, will meet every support I can give, and will undoubtedly merit the approbation of Congress."—*Washington to Lieut.-Col. William S. Smith*, 3 March, 1783.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

NEWBURG, 4 March, 1783.

* * * * * *

What, my dear Sir, could induce the State of Virginia to rescind their assent to the Impost Law? How are the numerous creditors in Civil as well as Military life to be paid unless there are regular & certain funds established to discharge the Interest of Monies which must be borrowed for these purposes? and what Tax can be more just, or better calculated to this end than an Impost?—

The Alarm Bell which has been rung with such tremendous sound of the danger of entrusting Congress with the money is too selfish & futile to require a serious answer—Who are Congress, but the People?—do they not return to them at certain short periods?—Are they not amenable at all times to them for their Conduct—& subject to recall?—What interest therefore can a man have under these circumstances distinct from his Constituents?—Can it be supposed, that with *design*, he would form a junto—or dangerous Aristocracy that would operate against himself in less than a Month perhaps after it should be established?—I can have no conception of it.

But from the observations I have made in the course of this war—and my intercourse with the States both in their united and seperate capacities have afforded ample opportunities of judging—I am decidedly of opinion that if the Powers of Congress are not enlarged, and made competent to all *general purposes* that the blood that has been spilt—the Ex-

pences which have been incurred—and the distresses which we have undergone will avail us nothing—and that the band which at present holds us together, by a very feeble thread, will soon be broken when anarchy & confusion must ensue.

You will excuse the freedom of these sentiments—they proceed from an honest heart Altho' they should be found to be the result of erroneous thinking—they will at least prove the sincerity of my friendship, as they are totally undisguised.

With great esteem &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, IN CONGRESS.[1]

NEWBURG, 4 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of February [7th], and thank you for the information and observations it has conveyed to me. I shall always think myself obliged by a free communication of Sentiments, and have often thought, (but suppose I thought wrong, as it did not accord with the practice of Congress,) that the public interest might be benefited if the Commander-in-Chief of the Army were let more into the political and pecuniary state of our affairs than he is. Enterprises, and the adoption of military and other arrangements, that might be exceedingly proper in some circumstances, would be altogether improper in others. It follows, then, by fair deduction, that,

[1] Colonel Hamilton left the army after the capitulation at Yorktown, and took his seat in Congress as a delegate from the State of New York on the 25th of November, 1782.

where there is a want of information, there must be a chance-medley; and a man may be upon the brink of a precipice before he is aware of his danger, when a little foreknowledge might enable him to avoid it. But this by the by.

The hint contained in your Letter, and the knowledge I have derived from the public Gazettes, respecting the non-payment of Taxes, contains all the information which I have received of the danger, that stares us in the face on acct. of our funds; and, so far was I from conceiving, that our Finances was in so deplorable a state *at this time*, that I had imbibed ideas from some source of information or another, that, with the prospect of a loan from Holland, we should be able to rub along yet a little further.

To you, who have seen the danger, to which the army has been exposed, to a political dissolution for want of subsistence, and the unhappy spirit of licentiousness, which it imbibed by becoming in one or two instances its own proveditors, no observations are necessary to evince the fatal tendency of such a measure; but I shall give it as my opinion, that it would at this day be productive of civil commotions and end in blood. Unhappy situation this! God forbid we should be involved in it.

The predicament, in which I stand as Citizen and soldier, is as critical and delicate as can well be conceived. It has been the subject of many contemplative hours. The suffering of a complaining army on one hand, and the inability of Congress and tardiness of the States on the other, are the forebodings of

evil, and may be productive of events, which are more to be deprecated than prevented. But I am not without hope, if there is such a disposition shown, as prudence and policy will dictate, to do justice, that your apprehensions in case of Peace are greater than there is cause for. In this, however, I may be mistaken, if those ideas, which you have been informed are propagating in the army, should be extensive; the source of which may be easily traced, as the old leaven *it is said*, for I have no proof of it, is again beginning to work under a mask of the most perfect dissimulation and apparent cordiality.

Be these things as they may, I shall pursue the same steady line of conduct, which has governed me hitherto; fully convinced, that the sensible and discerning part of the army cannot be unacquainted, (altho' I never took pains to inform them), with the services I have rendered it on more occasions than one. This, and pursuing the suggestions in your letter, which I am happy to find coincides with my practice for several months past (which has turned the business of the army into the Channel it now is), leaves me under no *great* apprehension of its exceeding the bounds of reason and moderation, notwithstanding the prevailing sentiment there is, that the prospect of compensation for past services will terminate with the war.

The just claims of the army ought, and it is to be hoped will have their weight with every sensible legislature in the United States, if Congress point to their demands, and show, if the case is so, the rea-

sonableness of them, and the impracticability of complying with them without their aid. In any other point of view, it would in my opinion be impolitic to introduce the army on the Tapis, lest it should excite jealousy and bring on its concomitants. The States cannot surely be so devoid of common sense, common honesty, and common policy, as to refuse their aid on a full, clear, and candid representation of facts from Congress; more especially if these should be enforced by members of their own body, who might demonstrate what the inevitable consequences of failure will lead to.

In my opinion it is a matter worthy of consideration, how far an adjournment of Congress for a few months is advisable. The Delegates in that case, if they are in unison themselves respecting the great defects of our constitution, may represent them fully and boldly to their constituents. To me, who know nothing of the business which is before Congress, nor of the arcanum, it appears that such a measure would tend to promote the public weal; for it is clearly my opinion, unless Congress have powers competent to all *general* purposes, that the distresses we have encountered, the Expense we have incurred, and the blood we have spilt in the course of an eight years war, will avail us nothing.

The contents of your letter is known only to myself. Your prudence will be at no loss to know what use to make of these sentiments. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] On the evening of February 20th Hamilton said in a private company: "It was certain that the army had secretly determined not to lay down their

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

SIR: HEAD QUARTERS, 8 March, 1783.

Very painfull Sensations are excited in my mind by your Letter of the 27th of Febry.[1] It is impossible for me to express to you the Regret with which I received the Information it contains.

arms until due provision and a satisfactory prospect should be afforded on the subject of their pay; that there was reason to expect that a public declaration to this effect would soon be made; that plans had been agitated, if not formed, for subsisting themselves after such declaration; that, as a proof of their earnestness on this subject, the Commander was already become extremely unpopular, among almost all ranks, from his known dislike to every unlawful proceeding; that this unpopularity was daily increasing and industriously promoted by many leading characters; that his choice of unfit and indiscreet persons into his family was the pretext, and with some the real motive; but the substantial one, a desire to displace him from the respect and confidence of the army, in order to substitute General , as the conductor of their efforts to obtain justice. Mr. Hamilton said that he knew General Washington intimately and perfectly; that his extreme reserve, mixed sometimes with a degree of asperity of temper, both of which were said to have increased of late, had contributed to the decline of his popularity; but that his virtue, his patriotism and firmness, would, it might be depended upon, never yield to any dishonorable or disloyal plans into which he might be called; that he would suffer himself to be cut to pieces; that he (H.) knowing this to be his true character, wished him to be the conductor of the army in their plans for redress, in order that they might be moderated and directed to proper objects, and exclude some other leader who might foment and misguide their councils; that with this view he had taken the liberty to write to the General on this subject, and to recommend such a policy to him."—*Madison Papers*, i., 350, 351. Hamilton's letter may be found in his *Works* (Lodge), viii., 94. In it he said:

"The difficulty will be to keep a *complaining* and *suffering army* within the bounds of moderation. This your Excellency's influence must effect. In order to do it, it will be advisable not to discountenance their endeavors to procure redress, but rather, by intervention of confidential and prudent persons, *to take the direction of them*. This, however, must not appear. It is of moment to the public tranquillity, that your Excellency should preserve the confidence of the army without losing that of the people. This will enable you, in case of extremity, to guide the current, and to bring order, perhaps even good, out of confusion. 'T is a part that requires address; but 't is one which your own situation, as well as the welfare of the community, points out."

[1] Announcing his intended resignation of office.

I have often reflected, with much solicitude upon the disagreeableness of your Situation and the Negligence of the Several States, in not enabling you to do that Justice to the public Creditors, which their Demands require. I wish the step you have taken may sound the Alarm to their inmost Souls, and rouse them to a just Sense of their own Interest, honor, and Credit. But I must confess to you, that I have my fears. For as danger becomes further removed from them, their feelings seem to be more callous to those noble Sentiments, with which I could wish to see them inspired. Mutual Jealousies, local prejudices, and misapprehensions have taken such deep Root, as will not easily be removed.

Notwithstanding the Embarrassments which you have experienced, I was in hopes that you would have continued your Efforts to the close of the War, at least; but if your Resolutions are absolutely fixed, I assure you I consider the Event as one of the most unfortunate that could have fallen upon the States, and most sincerely deprecate the sad consequences which I fear will follow. The Army, I am sure, at the same Time that they entertain the highest sense of your Exertions will lament the step you are obliged to take, as a most unfortunate Circumstance to them. I am &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, HEAD-QUARTERS, 12 March, 1783.

It is with inexpressible concern I make the following report to your Excellency. Two days ago, anonymous papers were circulated in the army, requesting

a general meeting of the officers on the next day. A copy of one of these papers is enclosed, No. 1. About the same time, another anonymous paper, purporting to be an address to the officers of the army, was handed about in a clandestine manner. A copy of this is marked No. 2. To prevent any precipitate and dangerous resolutions from being taken at this perilous moment, while the passions were all inflamed, as soon as these things had come to my knowledge the next morning, I issued the enclosed order, No. 3. In this situation the matter now rests.

As all opinion must be suspended until after the meeting on Saturday, I have nothing further to add, except a wish that the measure I have taken to dissipate a storm, which had gathered so suddenly and unexpectedly, may be acceptable to Congress; and to assure them that, in every vicissitude of circumstances, still actuated with the greatest zeal in their service, I shall continue my utmost exertions to promote the welfare of my country, under the most lively expectation, that Congress have the best intention of doing ample justice to the army as soon as circumstances will possibly admit.

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Since writing the foregoing, another anonymous paper is put in circulation, a copy of which is enclosed, No. 4.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, March 17th. Referred to Gilman, Dyer, Clark, Rutledge, and Mercer. The committee was composed to "saddle with this embarrassment the men who had opposed the measures necessary for satisfying the army, viz: the half-pay and permanent funds; against one or other of which the individuals in question had voted." Madison further recorded that "the

ADDRESS TO THE OFFICERS.[1]

GENTLEMEN,

By an anonymous summons an attempt has been made to convene you together. How inconsistent with the rules of propriety, how unmilitary, and how subversive of all good order and discipline, let the good sense of the army decide.

In the moment of this summons, another anonymous production was sent into circulation; addressed more to the feelings and passions, than to the reason and judgment of the army. The author of the piece is entitled to such credit for the goodness of his pen, and I could wish he had as much credit for the rectitude of his heart; for, as men see through different optics, and are induced by the reflecting faculties of the mind to use different means to obtain the same end, the author of the address should have had more charity, than to mark for suspicion the man, who should recommend moderation and longer forbearance, or in other words, who should not think as he thinks, and act as he advises. But he had another plan in view, in which candor and liberality of sentiment, regard to justice, and love of country, have no part; and he was right to insinuate the darkest suspicion, to effect the blackest designs.

That the address is drawn with great art, and is designed to answer the most insidious purposes, that it is calculated to impress the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and rouse all those resent-

steps taken by the General to avert the gathering storm, and his professions of inflexible adherence to his duty to Congress and to his country, excited the most affectionate sentiments towards him . . . [The situation] gave peculiar awe and solemnity to the present moment, and oppressed the minds of Congress with an anxiety and distress which had been scarcely felt in any period of the Revolution."

[1] "When the General took his station in the desk or pulpit, which you may recollect, was in the Temple, he took out his written address from his coat pocket, and his spectacles, with his other hand, from his waistcoat pocket, and then addressed the officers in the following manner: 'Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray, but almost blind, in the service of my country.' This little address, with the mode and manner of delivering it, drew tears from [many] of the officers."—*Colonel Cobb's letter.*

ments, which must unavoidably flow from such a belief; that the secret mover of this scheme, whoever he may be, intended to take advantage of the passions, while they were warmed by the recollection of past distresses, without giving time for cool, deliberate thinking, and that composure of mind which is so necessary to give dignity and stability to measures, is rendered too obvious by the mode of conducting the business, to need other proof than a reference to the proceeding.

Thus much, Gentlemen, I have thought it incumbent on me to observe to you, to show upon what principles I opposed the irregular and hasty meeting, which was proposed to be held on Tuesday last, and not because I wanted a disposition to give you every opportunity, consistent with your own honor and the dignity of the army, to make known your grievances. If my conduct heretofore has not evinced to you, that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But, as I was among the first, who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy, when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen, when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed, at this late stage of the war, that I am indifferent to its interests. But how are they to be promoted? The way is plain, says the anonymous addresser; if war continues, remove into the unsettled country; there establish yourselves, and leave an ungrateful country to defend itself. But whom are they to defend? Our wives, our children, our farms and other property, which we leave behind us? Or, in the state of hostile separation, are we to take the two first (the latter cannot be removed) to perish in a wilderness with hunger, cold, and nakedness? If peace takes place, neither sheath your swords, says he, until you have obtained full and ample justice. This dreadful alternative, of either deserting our country in the extremest hour of distress,

or turning our arms against it, which is the apparent object, unless Congress can be compelled into instant compliance, has something so shocking in it, that humility revolts at the idea. My God! What can this writer have in view by recommending such measures. Can he be a friend to the army? Can he be a friend to this country? Rather is he not an insidious foe? Some emissary, perhaps from New York, plotting the ruin of both by sowing the seeds of discord and separation between the civil and military powers of the continent? And what a compliment does he pay to our understandings, when he recommends measures, in either alternative, impracticable in their nature?

But here, Gentlemen, I will drop the curtain, because it would be as imprudent in me to assign my reasons for this opinion, as it would be insulting to your conception to suppose you stood in need of them. A moment's reflection will convince every dispassionate mind of the physical impossibility of carrying either proposal into execution.

There might, Gentlemen, be an impropriety in my taking notice, in this address to you, of an anonymous production; but the manner in which that performance has been introduced to the army, the effect it was intended to have, together with some other circumstances, will amply justify my observations on the tendency of that writing. With respect to the advice given by the author to suspect the man, who shall recommend moderate measures and longer forbearance, I spurn it, as every man who regards that liberty, and reveres that justice, for which we contend, undoubtedly must. For, if men are to be precluded from offering their sentiments on a matter, which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences, that can invite the consideration of mankind, reason is of no use to us; the freedom of speech may be taken away, and, dumb and silent, we may be led away like sheep to the slaughter.

I cannot, in justice to my own belief, and what I have great reason to conceive is the intention of Congress, conclude this address without giving it as my decided opinion, that that honorable body entertain exalted sentiments of the services of the army, and, from a full conviction of its merits and sufferings,

will do it complete justice. That their endeavors to discover, and establish funds for this purpose have been unwearied, and will not cease, till they have succeeded, I have no doubt; but, like all other large bodies, where there is a variety of different interests to reconcile, their deliberations are slow. Why then should we distrust them; and, in consequence of that distrust, adopt measures, which may cast a shade over that glory, which has been so justly acquired, and tarnish the reputation of an army, which is celebrated through all Europe for its fortitude and patriotism? And for what is this done? To bring the object we seek nearer? No! Most certainly, in my opinion, it will cast it at a greater distance.

For myself (and I take no merit in giving the assurance, being induced to it from principles of gratitude, veracity, and justice), a grateful sense of the confidence you have ever placed in me, a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you, under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that, in the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and in the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe to my country, and those powers we are bound to respect, you may freely command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

While I give you these assurances and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever ability I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, Gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures, which, in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained. Let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress, that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in their resolutions, which were published to you two days ago, and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as

you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man, who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country, and who wickedly attempts to open the flood gates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood.

By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice; you will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind, "Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection, to which human nature is capable of attaining."

TO JOSEPH JONES, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 12 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 27th ulto, and thank you for your information and the freedom of your communications. My official Letter to Congress of this date will inform you of what has happened in this Quarter; in addition to which, it may be necessary it should be known to you, and to such others you may think proper, that the temper of the army, though very irritable on acct. of their long protracted sufferings, have been apparently extremely quiet while their business was depending before Congress, until four days past. In the mean time, it should seem, reports have been propagated in Phila-

delphia, that dangerous combinations were forming in the army; and this at a time, when there was not a syllable of the kind in agitation in camp.[1]

It also appears, that, upon the arrival of a certain Gentleman from Phila. in camp, whose name[2] at present I do not incline to mention, such sentiments as these were immediately and industriously circulated; that it was universally expected the army would not disband until they had obtained justice; that the public creditors looked up to them for redress of their Grievances, would afford them every aid, and even join them in the Field if necessary; that some members of Congress wished the measure might take effect, in order to compel the Public, particularly the delinquent States, to do justice; with many other suggestions of a similar nature. From whence, and a variety of other considerations, it is generally believed, that the scheme was not only planned but also digested and matured in Philadelphia,[3] and that some people have been playing a double game, spreading at the camp and in Philadelphia Reports, and raising jealousies, equally void of

[1] In a letter to General Washington recently received from Mr. Jones, the latter had written: "Reports are freely circulated here, that there are dangerous combinations in the army; and within a few days past it has been said, that they are about to declare they will not disband until their demands are complied with."—*Philadelphia*, February 27th.

[2] Col. Walter Stewart.

[3] In a letter to Hamilton of much the same tenor, Washington wrote it was believed by some that the scheme "is the illegitimate offspring of a person in camp," but ran his pen through the words. On seeing the second address, he added a postscript: "The contents evidently prove that the author is in, or near the camp; and that the following words, erazed on the second page of this letter, ought not to have met with this treatment, vizt., &c."

foundation, until called into being by their vile artifices; for, as soon as the minds of the officers were thought to be prepared for the transaction, anonymous invitations were circulated, requesting a general meeting of the officers next day. At the same instant many copies of the address to the officers of the army was scattered in every State line of it.

So soon as I obtained knowledge of these things, I issued the order of the 11th, transmitted to Congress, in order to rescue the foot, that stood wavering on the precipice of despair, from taking those steps, which would have led to the abyss of misery, while the passions were inflamed and the mind tremblingly alive with the recollection of past sufferings, and their present feelings. I did this upon the principle, that it is easier to divert from a wrong to a right path, than it is to recall the hasty and fatal steps, that have been already taken.

It is commonly supposed, that, if the officers had met agreeably to the anonymous summons, resolutions might have been formed, the consequences of which may be more easily conceived than expressed. Now they will have leisure to view the matter more calmly and seriously. It is to be hoped that they will be induced to adopt more rational measures, and wait a while longer for the settlemt. of their accts; the postponing of which gives more uneasiness in the army than any other thing. There is not a man in it, who will not acknowledge that Congress have not the means of payment; but why not, say they one and all, liquidate the accts. and certifie our dues?

Are we to be disbanded and sent home without this? Are we afterwards to make individual applications for such settlements at Philadelphia, or any auditing office in our respective States; to be shifted perhaps from one board to another, dancing attendance at all, and finally perhaps, be postponed till we lose the substance in pursuit of ye shadow? While they are agitated by these considerations, there are not wanting insidious characters, who tell them it is neither the wish nor the intention of the public to settle their accounts; but to delay this business under one pretext or another, until Peace, wch: we are upon the verge of, and a separation of the army takes place; when, it is well known it will be difficult if not impracticable; a general settlement never can be effected, and that individual loss in this instance becomes public gain.

However derogatory these ideas are with the dignity, honor, and justice of government, yet a matter so interesting to the army, and at the same time so easy to be effected by the Public, as that of liquidating the accounts, is delayed without any apparent or obvious necessity, they will have their place in a mind that is soured and irritated. Let me entreat you, therefore, my good Sir, to push this matter to an issue; and, if there are Delegates among you, who are really opposed to doing justice to the army, scruple not to tell them, if matters should come to extremity, that they must be answerable for all the ineffable horrors, which may be occasioned thereby. I am most sincerely and affectionately yours.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
18 March, 1783.

SIR,

The result of the proceedings of the grand Convention of Officers, which I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious Proof of Patriotism, which could have been given by men, who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude, of their country.[1]

Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those, who have so long, so patiently, and so chearfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having from motives of justice, duty, and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to write to your Excellency, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects

[1] "Yesterday there was a meeting of the officers. The Commander in Chief came among us, and made a most excellent address; he appeared sensibly agitated; as the writer advises to 'suspect the man who should advise to more moderation and longer forbearance,' this expression, together with a second anonymous letter, which I have not seen, gave reason to suppose that it was a plan laid against his Excellency, as every one who knows him must be sensible that he would recommend moderation. The general having finished his address, retired. Gen'l Gates took the chair; the business of the day was conducted with order, moderation, and decency."—*Major J. A. Wright to Major John Webb*, West Point, 16 March, 1783.

of the late address from the army to that Honble. Body; it now only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede in their behalf, as I now do, that the Sovereign Power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced of, and the confidence the army have reposed in the justice of their country.

And here I humbly conceive it is altogether unnecessary, (while I am pleading the cause of an army, which has done and suffered more than any other army ever did in the defence of the rights and liberties of human nature,) to expatiate on their *claims* to the most ample compensation for their meritorious Services; because they are perfectly known to whole World, and because, altho' the topics are inexhaustible, enough has already been said on the subject.

To prove these assertions, to evince that my sentiments have ever been uniform, and to show what my ideas of the rewards in question have always been, I appeal to the Archives of Congress, and call on those sacred deposits to witness for me; and, in order that my observations and arguments in favor of a future adequate provision for the officers of the army may be brought to remembrance again, and considered in a single point of view, without giving Congress the trouble of having recourse to their files, I will beg leave to transmit herewith an Extract from a representation made by me to a committee of Congress, so long ago as the 29th of January, 1778, and also the transcript of a letter to the President of Congress,

dated near Passaic Falls, October 11th, 1780.[1] That, in the critical and perilous moment when the last mentioned communication was made, there was the utmost danger a dissolution of the army would take place, unless measures similar to these recommended had been adopted, will not admit a doubt. That the adoption of the resolution, granting half-pay for life, has been attended with all the happy consequences I had foretold, so far as respected the good of the service, let the astonishing contrast between the state of the army at this instant, and at the former period, determine; and that the establishment of funds and security, of the payment of all the just demands of the army, will be the most certain means of preserving the national faith, and the future tranquillity of this extensive continent, is my decided opinion.

By the preceding remarks it will readily be imagined, that, instead of retracting and reprehending, from farther experience and reflection, the mode of compensation so strenuously urged in the Enclosures, I am more and more confirmed in the Sentiment; and, if in the wrong, suffer me to please myself with the grateful delusion. For if, besides the simple payment of their Wages, a farther compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army have not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then have I been beguiled by prejudice, and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country

[1] The two letters here alluded to were published, and are contained in the *Remembrancer*, vol. xvi., pp. 200, 202. See also a series of documents in the *Journals of Congress*, under the date of April 24th.

should not in the event perform every thing, which has been requested in the late Memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope, that has been excited, void of foundation. And "if" (as has been suggested, for the purpose of inflaming their passions,) "the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by this resolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade thro' the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor;" then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale, which will embitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude.

Should any intemperate or improper warmth have mingled itself amongst the foregoing observations, I must entreat your Excellency and Congress, it may be attributed to the effusion of an honest zeal in the best of causes, and that my peculiar situation may be my apology; and I hope I need not, on this momentous occasion, make any new protestations of personal disinterestedness, having ever renounced for myself the idea of pecuniary reward. The consciousness of having attempted faithfully to discharge my duty, and the approbation of my Country, will be a sufficient recompense for my services. I have the honor to be, with perfect respect, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, March 22d. Referred to Osgood, Bland, Hamilton, Wolcott, and Peters. "It was observable that the part which the General had

TO JOSEPH JONES, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 18 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

The storm, which seemed to be gathering with unfavorable prognostics when I wrote to you last, is dispersed, and we are again in a state of tranquillity. But do not, my dear Sir, suffer this appearance of tranquillity to relax your endeavors to bring the requests of the army to an issue. Believe me, the officers are too much pressed by their present wants, and rendered too sore by the recollection of their past sufferings, to be touched much longer upon the string of forbearance, in matters wherein they can see no cause for delay; nor would I have further reliance placed upon any influence of mine to dispel other clouds, if any should arise from the causes of the last.

By my official Letter to Congress, and the Papers enclosed in it, you will have a full view of my assurances to, and the expectations of, the army; and I persuade myself, that the well-wishers to both and of their Country will exert themselves to the utmost to eradicate the Seeds of distrust, and give every satisfaction that justice requires, and the means which Congress possess will enable them to do.

In a former letter I observed to you, that a liquidation of accts., in order that the ballances might be ascertained, is the great object of the army; and cer-

found it necessary, and thought it his duty, to take, would give birth to events much more serious, if they should not be obviated by the establishment of such funds as the General, as well as the army, had declared to be necessary." —*Madison Papers*, i., 404.

tainly nothing can be more reasonable. To have these ballances discharged at this or in any short time, however desirable, they know is impracticable, and do not expect it; although in the mean time they must labor under the pressure of these sufferings, which is felt more sensibly by a comparison of circumstances.

The situation of these Gentlemen merits the attention of every thinking and grateful mind. As officers, they have been *obliged* to dress and appear in character, to effect which they have been *obliged* to anticipate their pay, or participate their Estates. By the former, debts have been contracted; by the latter, their patrimony is injured. To disband men, therefore, under these circumstances, before their accts. are liquidated and the ballances ascertained, would be to set open the doors of the Goals, and then to shut them upon seven years of faithful and painful services. Under any circumstances, which the nature of the case will admit, they must be considerable sufferers; because necessity will compel them to part with their certificates for whatever they will fetch, to avoid the evil I have mentioned above; and how much this will place them in the hands of unfeeling, avaracious speculators, a recurrence to past experience will sufficiently prove.

It may be said by those, who have no disposition to compensate the Services of the army, that the officers have too much penetration to place dependence (in any alternative), upon the strength of their own arm. I will readily concede to these gentlemen,

that no good could result from such an attempt; but I hope they will be equally candid in acknowledging, that much mischief may flow from it; and that nothing is too extravagant to expect from men, who conceive they are ungratefully and unjustly dealt by; especially too, if they can suppose that characters are not wanting to foment every passion, which leads to discord, and that there are—but time shall reveal the rest.

Let it suffice, that the very attempt wd. imply a want of justice, and fix an indelible stain upon our national character; as the whole world, as well from the enemy's publications (without any intention to serve us), as our own, must be strongly impressed with the sufferings of this army from hunger, cold, and nakedness, in almost every stage of the war. Very sincerely and affectionately, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 19 March, 1783.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge your Excellency's favor of the 12th instant, and to thank you most sincerely for the intelligence you were pleased to communicate.[1] The articles of treaty between America

[1] The packet *Washington*, commanded by Captain Barney, which sailed from L'Orient on the 17th of January, arrived in Philadelphia on the morning of the 12th of March, and brought the news of the *preliminary articles of peace* between Great Britain and the United States having been signed by the commissioners at Paris on the 30th of November.—*Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. x., p. 117.

and Great Britain are as full and satisfactory as we have reason to expect; but, from the connexion in which they stand with a general pacification, they are very inconclusive and contingent. From this circumstance, compared with such other intelligence as I have been able to collect, I must confess, I have my fears that we shall be obliged to worry through another campaign before we arrive at that happy period, which is to crown all our toils.

Any intelligence from your Excellency will at all times be very agreeable to me. But, should it be in your power to announce a general peace, you could not make me more happy than in the communication of such an event. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

NEWBURG, 19 March, 1783.

DEAR LUND,

I did not write to you by the last post. I was too much engaged at the time, in counteracting a most insidious attempt to disturb the repose of the army, and sow the seeds of discord between the civil and military powers of the continent, to attend to small matters. The author of this attempt, whoever he may be, is yet behind the curtain; and as conjectures might be wrong, I shall be silent at present. The good sense, the virtue and patient forbearance of the army on this, as upon every other trying occasion which has happened to call them into action, has again triumphed; and appeared with more lustre than

ever. But if the States will not furnish the supplies required by Congress, thereby enabling the Superintendant of Finance to feed, clothe, and pay the army, if they suppose the war can be carried on without money, or that money can be borrowed without permanent funds to pay the interest of it; if they have no regard to justice, because it is attended with expence; if gratitude to men, who have rescued them from the jaws of danger and brought them to the haven of Independence and Peace, is to subside, as danger is removed; if the sufferings of the army, who have borne and forborne more than any other class of men in the United States, expending their health, and many of them their all, in an unremitted service of near eight years in the field; encountering hunger, cold and nakedness, are to be forgotten; if it is presumed there is no bounds to the patience of the army; or that when peace takes place, their claims for pay due, and rewards promised may die with the military non-existence of its member—if such, I say, should be the sentiments of the States, and that their conduct, or the conduct of some, does but too well warrant the conclusion, well may another anonymous addresser step forward, and with more effect than the last did, say with him, "You have arms in your hands; do justice to yourselves, and never sheath the sword, till you have obtained it." How far men who labor under the pressure of accumulated distress, and are irritated by a belief that they are treated with neglect, ingratitude and injustice in the extreme might be worked upon by design-

ing men, is worthy of very serious consideration. But justice, policy, yea common sense must tell every man that the creditors of the continent cannot receive payments unless funds are provided for it, and that our national character, if these are much longer neglected, must be stamped with indelible infamy in every nation of the world where the fact is known.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

19 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 12th and for the enclosures—the early communication of such important occurrances rendered the favor doubly acceptable. Would to God the articles for a general pacification were as well advanced as those. between America and Great Britain; but I am not without fears that that event is at a greater distance than the sanguine ones imagine.

The policy of G. Britain now, if I have formed a right judgment, is to sooth America as much as possible, in order to weaken the bond and make her uneasy under the Alliance, if the policy, or situation of France with respect to the other Beligerent powers renders it necessary to continue the war another Campaign. This, or some manœuvre, which may be performed with safety during the equipment of the Fleet at Cadiz must, undoubtedly, be the cause of the present procrastination of the negociations at Paris. What the final issue may be Heaven knows—

Such an avidity appears among our People to make money, and so feeble the Reins of Government (where there is an attempt to use them) to restrain the illicit and pernicious intercourse of Trade with the enemy at New York, that the fence between them and us is entirely broken down, and nothing but an Army quite sufficient to form a close investiture of that place can repair it. Five such armies as I have would be incompetent, employed in any other way. The boats which have been Commissioned to obstruct this trade, are instrumental in carrying it on, and have been caught in the act as many other Trading parties also have been by the Guards and patroles I keep for this purpose. But it avails nothing. By Hook or by Crook they are certain of acquittal. In truth I am quite discouraged, and have scarce any thing left but lamentation for the want [of] virtue and depravity of my Countrymen. * * *

TO GOVERNOR BENJAMIN HARRISON.

NEWBURG, 19 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

About the first of this month I wrote you a long letter. I touched upon the state of the army, the situation of public creditors, and wished to know from you as a friend, what causes had induced the Assembly of Virginia to withdraw their assent to the Impost Law, and how the Continental creditors (without adequate funds) were to come at or obtain security for their money. I little expected at the time of

writing that letter, that we were on the eve of an important crisis to this army, when the touchstone of discord was to be applied, and the virtue of its members to undergo the severest trial.

You have not been altogether unacquainted, I dare say, with the fears, the hopes, the apprehensions, and the expectations of the army, relatively to the provision, which is to be made for them hereafter. Altho' a firm reliance on the integrity of Congress, and a belief that the Public would finally do justice to all its Servants and give an indisputable security for the payment of the half-pay of the officers, had kept them amidst a variety of sufferings tolerably quiet and contented for two or three years past; yet the total want of pay, the little prospect of receiving any from the unpromising state of the public finances, and the absolute aversion of the States to establish any Continental funds for the payment of the Debt due to the army, did at the close of the last Campaign excite greater discontents, and threaten more serious and alarming consequences, than it is easy for me to describe or you to conceive. Happily for us, the officers of highest rank and greatest consideration interposed; and it was determined to address Congress in an humble, pathetic, and explicit manner.

While the Sovereign Power appeared perfectly well disposed to do justice, it was discovered that the States would enable them to do nothing; and in this state of affairs, and after some time spent on the business in Philadelphia, a Report was made by the Delegates of the army, giving a detail of the proceedings. Be-

fore this could be communicated to the Troops, while the minds of all were in a peculiar state of inquietude and irritation, an anonymous writer, who tho' he did not boldly step forth and give his name to the world, sent into circulation an address to the officers of the army, which, in point of composition, in elegance and force of expression, has rarely been equalled in the English Language, and in which the dreadful alternative was proposed, of relinquishing the Service in a body, in case the war continued, or retaining their arms in case of peace, until Congress should comply with all their demands. At the same time, seizing the moment when the minds were inflamed by the most pathetic representations, a General meeting of the officers was summoned by another anonymous production.

It is impossible to say what would have been the consequence, had the author succeeded in his first plans. But, measures having been taken to postpone the meeting, so as to give time for cool reflection and counteraction, the good sense of the officers has terminated this affair in a manner, which reflects the greatest glory on themselves, and demands the highest expressions of gratitude from their Country.

The Proceedings have been reported to Congress, and will probably be published for the satisfaction of the good people of these United States. In the mean time I thought it necessary to give you these particulars, principally with a design to communicate to you without reserve my opinion on this interesting subject. For, notwithstanding the storm has now passed over, notwithstanding the officers have in

Army-

despite of their accumulated sufferings given the most unequivocal and exalted proofs of Patriotism, yet I believe, unless justice shall be done, and funds effectually provided for the payment of the Debt, the most deplorable and ruinous consequences may be apprehended. Justice, honor, gratitude, policy, every thing is opposed to the conduct of driving men to despair of obtaining their just rights, after serving Seven years a painful life in the Field. I say in the *Field*, because they have not during that period had any thing to shelter them from the inclemency of the seasons but Tents and such Houses as they could build for themselves.

Convinced of this, and actuated as I am, not by private and Interested motives, but by a sense of duty, a love of justice, and all the feelings of gratitude towards a body of men, who have merited infinitely well of their Country, I can never conceal or suppress my Sentiments. I cannot cease to exert all the abilities I am possessed of, to show the evil tendency of procrastinated justice, for I will not suppose it is intended ultimately to withhold it, nor fail to urge the Establishment of such adequate and permanent funds, as will enable Congress to secure the payment of the public Debt, on such principles as will preserve the national faith, give satisfaction to the army and tranquillity to the Public. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

P. S. The author of the Anonymous Address is yet behind the curtain; and, as conjecture may be grounded on error, I will not announce mine *at present*.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
23 March, 1783.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have to acknowledge the honor of your favors of the 14th & 24th of October and 4th of Decr. ;—to thank you for the warm and affectionate expression of them ;—and to congratulate you and Madame La Fayette on the birth of a daughter. Virginia, I am persuaded, will be pleased with the compliment of the name ; and I pray as a member of it she may live to be a blessing to her Parents.

It would seem that, none of my Letters (except one by Colonel Gimat) had reached you when you last wrote. I do not know how to account for this. My last letter to you went by the Chevr. Chastellux, which could not have arrived ; the others were committed to the care either of ye Chevr. de la Luzerne, or our Secretary of Foreign Affairs at Philadelphia, to be forwarded by such conveyances as might offer.

I am fully persuaded, my dear Marquis, of your zeal in the American Cause. I am sure you adopted the plan you are now in the execution of as the most likely, tho' a little circuitous, to serve it—and I shall express to Congress, who I know have an exalted opinion of your zeal, abilities, and faithful Services, my entire approbation of your conduct, and the purity of the motives which gave rise to it. Your pursuit after honor and glory will be accompanied by my warmest wishes, and you have my sincerest congratulations in your promotion, and command in the French Army.

As it is your wish, I have given Colo. Gouvion my consent to meet you at the rendezvous appointed him. He sets out with all the alacrity of a friend to attend it. You must receive him as a precious loan, because I esteem and value him and because it is to you only I would part with him. I should be happy, if I could speak decidedly upon any plan of operation on the American theatre in which the Naval and Land forces of His Most Christian Majesty could be combined. But such is the State of our finances, such the backwardness of the States to Establish funds, and such the distress of the Army for want of them, that I dare give no pointed assurances of effectual co-operation lest I should, unintentionally, be guilty of deception—especially as my estimates and sentiments respecting the ensuing Campaign, are now pending before Congress for decision.

Last year, while I had the prospect of a vigorous campaign before me (founded on the hope of succors from your Court) I took a comprehensive view of the Enemy's situation, and our own, arranged the whole under different heads, and digested plans of attack applicable to each. This I have put into the hands of Colo. Gouvion to copy for you; and with the alterations occasioned by the change of circumstances, and such other information as you will receive from this Letter, and from him, will enable you to judge as fully as I can do (in my present state of incertitude) what can be attempted with such a force as you can bring at either of the places mentioned therein.

No requisitions by Congress, have yet been made

of the States for men. Whether this proceeds from the present state of the public funds, and little prospect of bettering them, or the hope of Peace; or partly from both, does not lye with me to decide. But so the fact is. So far indeed were they from requiring men to recruit the Battalions of last year, that several of them have been reduced, and the non-commissioned officers and privates incorporated in their respective State lines. This however has no otherwise reduced our efficient force than by the diminution of Commissioned officers; but all Corps, that are not fed with recruits, must dwindle, from the deaths, desertions, and discharges incident to them—the last of which you well know, operates more powerfully in our army than most others. Our present force, tho small in numbers, is excellent in composition, and may be depended upon as far as the first are competent. About June the *total* of *this Army* exclusive of *Commissioned* officers, may be computed at 9,000, and by October it will have deceased near 1,000 men, by the discharge of so many whose term of service will have expired.

I am impressed with a belief that *no* Militia could be drawn out *previous* to the arrival of a French fleet, and Land force on the Coast. I am not *sanguine* that *many* could be had afterwards, but certain it is, there would be great difficulty in subsisting and providing for them, if it should be found necessary to call for their aid. Hence it appears, that little or no dependence is to be placed on any other Troops than the Continentals of this army. These would require

very little previous notice for an operation against New York, which is the only Post of importance the enemy have within the United States, and indeed the only one against which they could move for want of transportation, or the means to obtain it.

Penobscot is a secondary object unassailable but by means of a Naval Superiority, with which the place might soon be carried without the aid of American Troops; to call for which would spread the alarm and waste time for an unnecessary purpose.

Motives, my dear Marquis, of friendship and candor have given birth to the freedom of this communication, on my part; good sense and prudence will point it to proper objects, on yours; and on your honor and discretion I can firmly rely. It only remains for me to add, for your farther information, that since May last (when my thoughts on the plan of Campaign for 1782 were digested as they are now sent to you,) Charles Town and Savanna having been evacuated, and Troops (Recruits principally) having arrived from Europe; the Enemies Posts have been strengthened: New York, agreeably to the Estimates of General Greene and Major Burnett which I enclose, by 3,000 men; Hallifax and Canada from European and other accounts by the like number; and Penobscot by 3 or 400 more. These being the only changes which have happened since my statement of the Enemys force in May last, you will be able to bring the whole into one view and determine accordingly. It is reported that a number (some say seven) British Regiments are about to Embark for the West Indies;

by other accounts the whole are said to be going thither; but there is not, I believe, any orders for either yet come to hand in this mem.—every thing with them is suspended.

Your polite and friendly offer to my nephew, claims my grateful acknowledgements;—I wish he was in a condition to avail himself of it.—He has been in a declining state of health near 12 months—but was something better the last time I heard from him. McHenry has left the Military and embraced a Civil walk of life; by which Act he has disqualified himself from answering your purposes. The Vessel you gave us room to expect, is not arrived; but Gouvion will go to Philadelphia and seek a passage from thence.—He can tell you more forcibly than I can express it how much we all love and wish to embrace you. When, how, or where this will happen you best can tell. For myself particularly, I hope it is unnecessary to repeat to you that whether during the continuance of the war, or after the olive branch shall have extended itself over this land (for which I most devoutly pray) I shall be happy to see you on Columbia's shore.—The Inhabitants of my humble Cottage will salute you with the richest marks of grateful friendship wch. to a mind susceptible as yours is will be a greater feast than the luxuries of the East, the elegancies of Europe, or the ceremonies of a Court, can afford. Adieu—believe me always

My dear Marquis

Yrs. &c.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 29 March, 1783.

SIR,

The news of a general peace, which your Excellency has been so good as to announce to me, has filled my mind with inexpressible satisfaction; and permit me to add, that the joy I feel on this great event is doubly enhanced by the very obliging manner in which you have been pleased to express your congratulations to me and to the army on this happy occasion.[1]

The part your Excellency has acted in the cause of America, and the great and benevolent share you have taken in the establishment of her independence, are deeply impressed in my mind, and will not be effaced from my remembrance, or that of the citizens of America. You will accept, Sir, my warmest acknowledgments and congratulations, with assurances that I shall always participate, with the highest

[1] The first intelligence of the signing of a *general treaty of peace* at Paris, on the 20th of January, was brought to America by the *Triumph*, a French armed vessel, sent by Lafayette from Count d'Estaing's squadron at Cadiz. It arrived in Philadelphia in the afternoon of the 23d of March. The following letter was received by the President of Congress from the Marquis de Lafayette:

"Cadiz, 5 February, 1783.

"SIR,

"Having been at some pains to engage a vessel to go to Philadelphia, I now find myself happily relieved by the kindness of Count d'Estaing. He is just now pleased to tell me, that he will despatch a French ship, and, by way of compliment on the occasion, he has made choice of the *Triumph*. So that I am not without hopes of giving Congress the first tidings of a general peace; and I am happy in the smallest opportunity of doing any thing, that may prove agreeable to America.

"I have the honor to be, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

pleasure, in every event, which contributes to your happiness and satisfaction.

The articles of the general treaty do not appear so favorable to France, in point of territorial acquisitions, as they do to the other powers. But the magnanimous and disinterested scale of action, which that great nation has exhibited to the world during this war, and at the conclusion of peace, will insure to the King and nation that reputation, which will be of more consequence to them than every other consideration.

Mrs. Washington begs your Excellency to accept her sincerest thanks for the joy you have communicated to her, and to receive a return of her congratulations on this most happy of all events.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

HEAD QUARTERS, 29 March, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your obliging Letter of the 24 was delivered me the day before Yesterday, and accompanied the account of a General Peace having been concluded in Europe on the 20 of January last—Most sincerely do I accept your Congratulations on the happy event

[1] "Your Excellency will permit me, with the most lively sensations of gratitude and pleasure, to return you my warmest thanks for the communication, which you have been pleased to make to me and to the army, of the glorious news of a general peace; an event, which cannot fail to diffuse a general joy throughout the United States, but to none of their citizens more than to the officers and soldiers, who now compose the army. It is impossible for me to express

which has already diffused a General Joy thro' every class of People and to none more than to the Army—It will now be our own faults if we do not enjoy that happiness which we have flattered ourselves this Event would bring. To see such Measures taken as will ensure this, is all that remains for me to wish—I shall then enjoy in the bosom of my family a felicity that will amply repay every care.

In a letter I received by the Cutter from the Marqs. De la Fayette dated Cadiz, Feby. 5th, is this passage:

"Independent of my public letter to Mr. Livingston, there is a private one which he will also communicate.—Amongst the many favors I have received, I would take it as a most flattering circumstance in my life to be sent to England with the ratification of the American Treaty—you know it is but an honorary Commission, that would require the attendance of a few weeks, and if any Sedentary Minister is sent, I should have the pleasure of introducing him—this my dear General is entirely confidential."

From hence I suppose it is necessary for Congress to ratifie the treaty of Peace entered into by their Commissioners at Paris, to give it the form and solemnity which is essential to such a work, and that the Marqs. wishes for the honor of putting the last hand to this business by being the bearer of the Ratification. How far it is consistent with our Na-

the joy, with which I beg your Excellency to accept a return of my sincerest congratulations on this happiest of events. The commutation of the half-pay, and the measures adopted for the liquidation of their accounts, will give great satisfaction to the army; and will prove an additional tie to strengthen their confidence in the justice and benevolent intentions of Congress towards them." —*Washington to the President of Congress*, 30 March, 1783.

tional honor, how far motives of policy make for or against sending a foreigner with it, or how far such a measure might disappoint the expectation of others, I pretend not to determine, but if there is no impropriety, or injustice in it, I should hope that Congress would feel a pleasure in gratifying the wishes of a man who has been such a zealous laborer in the cause of this Country. Whether the above paragraph was only meant to bring me acquainted with what he had done, or that I might second his views, I know not,—therefore notwithstanding the injunction I have given these sentiments.[1] * * * I am, &c.

TO COLONEL BLAND.

HEAD QUARTERS, 31st March, 1783.

SIR,

The Article in the provisional Treaty respecting Negroes, which you mention to Sir Guy Carleton, had escaped my Notice, but upon a recurrence to the Treaty, I find it as you have stated. I have therefore tho't it may not be amiss to send in your Letter to Sir Guy, and have accordingly done it.

Altho I have several Servants in like predicament with yours, I have not yet made any attempt for their recovery.

Sir Guy Carleton's reply to you will decide upon the propriety or expediency of any pursuit to obtain

[1] Livingston raised some objection, and on the 16th of April Washington wrote that while there was no man upon earth he had a greater inclination to serve than Lafayette, he "had not a wish to do it in matters that interfere with, or are repugnant to, our national policy, dignity, or interest."

them. If that reply should not be transmitted thro my Hands, I will thank you for a Communication of it.

With much Regard, I am, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 31 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have duly received your favors of the 17th and 24th ultimo. I rejoice most exceedingly that there is an end to our warfare, and that such a field is opening to our view, as will, with wisdom to direct the cultivation of it, make us a great, a respectable, and happy people; but it must be improved by other means than State politics, and unreasonable jealousies and prejudices, or (it requires not the second sight to see that) we shall be instruments in the hands of our enemies, and those European powers, who may be jealous of our greatness in union, to dissolve the confederation. But, to obtain this, although the way seems extremely plain, is not so easy.

My wish to see the union of these States established upon liberal and permanent principles, and inclination to contribute my mite in pointing out the defects of the present constitution, are equally great. All my private letters have teemed with these sentiments, and, whenever this topic has been the subject of conversation, I have endeavored to diffuse and enforce them; but how far any further essay by me might be productive of the wished-for end, or appear

to arrogate more than belongs to me, depends so much upon popular opinions, and the temper and dispositions of the people, that it is not easy to decide. I shall be obliged to you, however, for the thoughts, which you promised me on this subject, and as soon as you can make it convenient.

No man in the United States is or can be more deeply impressed with the necessity of a reform in our present confederation than myself. No man perhaps has felt the bad effects of it more sensibly; for to the defects thereof, and want of powers in Congress, may justly be ascribed the prolongation of the war, and consequently the expenses occasioned by it. More than half the perplexities I have experienced in the course of my command, and almost the whole of the difficulties and distress of the army, have their origin here. But still, the prejudices of some, the designs of others, and the mere machinery of the majority, make address and management necessary to give weight to opinions, which are to combat the doctrines of those different classes of men in the field of politics.

I would have been more full on this subject, but the bearer (in the clothing department) is waiting. I wish you may understand what I have written. I am, etc.[1]

* * * * * *

[1] "You will give the highest credit to my sincerity when I beg you to accept my warmest congratulations on this glorious and happy event [peace]—an event which crowns all our labors, and will sweeten the toils which we have experienced in the course of eight years distressing war. The army here universally participate in the general joy which this event has diffused, and

TO THEODORICK BLAND.

NEWBURG, 4 April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

On Sunday last the Baron de Steuben handed me your obliging favor of the 22d of March. Permit me to offer you my unfeigned thanks for the clear and candid opinions which you have given me of European politics. Your reasonings upon the conduct of the different Powers at War would have appeared conclusive, had not the happy event which has been since announced to us, and on which I most sincerely congratulate you, proved how well they were founded. Peace has given rest to speculative opinions respecting the time and terms of it. The first has come as soon as we could well have expected it under the disadvantages which we labored; and the latter is abundantly satisfactory.

It is now the bounden duty of every one to make the blessings thereof as diffusive as possible. Nothing would so effectually bring this to pass as the removal of those local prejudices which intrude upon and embarass that great line of policy which alone can make us a free, happy and powerful People. Unless our Union can be fixed upon such a basis as to

from this consideration, together with the late resolutions of Congress, for the commutation of the half pay, and for a liquidation of all their accounts, their minds are filled with the highest satisfaction. I am sure you will join with me in this additional occasion of joy.

"It remains only for the States to be wise, and to establish their independence on the basis of an inviolable, efficacious union, and a firm confederation, which may prevent their being made the sport of European policy. May heaven give them wisdom to adopt the measures still necessary for this important purpose."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 31 March, 1783.

accomplish these, certain I am we have toiled, bled and spent our treasure to very little purpose.

We have now a National character to establish, and it is of the utmost importance to stamp favorable impressions upon it; let justice be then one of its characteristics, and gratitude another. Public creditors of every denomination will be comprehended in the first; the Army in a particular manner will have a claim to the latter; to say that no distinction can be made between the claims of public creditors is to declare that there is no difference in circumstances; or that the services of all men are equally alike. This Army is of near eight years' standing, six of which they have spent in the Field without any other shelter from the inclemency of the seasons than Tents, or such Houses as they could build for themselves without expence to the public. They have encountered hunger, cold and nakedness. They have fought many Battles and bled freely. They have lived without pay, and in consequence of it, officers as well as men have subsisted upon their Rations.

They have often, very often, been reduced to the necessity of Eating Salt Porke, or Beef not for a day, or a week only but months together without Vegetables or money to buy them; or a cloth to wipe on.

Many of them to do better, and to dress as Officers have contracted heavy debts or spent their patrimonies. The first see the Doors of Goals open to receive them—whilst those of the latter are shut against them. Is there no discrimination then—no extra exertion to be made in favor of men in these

peculiar circumstances, in the event of their military dissolution? Or, if no worse cometh of it, are they to be turned adrift soured and discontented, complaining of the ingratitude of their Country, and under the influence of these passions, to become fit subjects for unfavorable impressions, and unhappy dissentions? For permit me to add, tho every man in the Army feels his distress—it is not every one that will reason to the cause of it.

I would not from the observations here made, be understood to mean that Congress should (because I know they cannot, nor does the army expect it) pay the full arrearages due to them till Continental or State funds are established for the purpose. They would, from what I can learn, go home contented—nay—*thankful* to receive what I have mentioned in a more public letter of this date, and in the manner there expressed. And surely this may be effected with proper exertions. Or what possibility was there of keeping the army together, if the war had continued, when the victualling, clothing, and other expenses of it were to have been added? Another thing Sir, (as I mean to be frank and free in my communications on this subject) I will not conceal from you—it is the dissimilarity in the payments to men in Civil and Military life. The first receive everything—the other get nothing but bare subsistence—they ask what this is owing to? and reasons have been assigned, which, say they, amount to this—that men in Civil life have stronger passions and better pretensions to indulge them, or less virtue and regard for

their Country than us,—otherwise, as we are all contending for the same prize and equally interested in the attainment of it, why do we not bear the burthen equally?

These and other comparisons which are unnecessary to enumerate give a keener edge to their feelings and contribute not a little to sour their tempers. As it is the first wish of my Soul to see the War happily & speedily terminated; and those who are now in arms, returned to Citizenship with good dispositions, I think it a duty which I owe to candor and to friendship, to point you to such things as my opportunities have given me reason to believe will have a tendency to harmony and bring them to pass. I shall only add that with much esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO THEODORICK BLAND.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 April, 1783.

SIR,

The subject of your private letter is so important and involving so many considerations, that I could not hazard my own opinion *only* for a Reply. I have therefore communicated its contents to some of the most intelligent, well-informed, and confidential officers, whose judgment I have compelled, and endeavored to collect from them, what is the general Line and Expectation of the Army at large respectg. the points you mention—and as this is meant to be equally private and confidential as yours, I shall communicate my sentiments to you without reserve, and with the most entire Freedom.

The idea of the officers in keeping the Army together until Settlement of their accounts is effected, and *Funds established* for their Security, is perhaps not so extensive as the words of their Resolution seem to intimate. When that Idea was first expressed, our prospects of Peace were Distant, and it was supposed that Settlement and Funds might both be effected before a Dissolution of the Army would probably take place. They wished therefore to have both done at once. But since the Expectation of Peace is bro't so near, however desirable it would be to the officers, to have their Ballances secured to them upon sufficient Funds, as well as their Settlement ascertained, yet it is not in Idea, that the Army should be held together for the sole Purpose of enforcing either. Nor do they suppose that, by such Means, they could operate on the *Fears* of the civil power, or of the people at large—the impracticability as well as ill policy of such a mode of Conduct is easily discoverable by every sensible Intelligent officer.—The Tho't is reprobated as ridiculous and inadmissible.

Tho' these are their Ideas on the particular Point you have mentioned, yet they have their Expectations and they are of a very serious Nature and will require all the Attention and consideration of Congress to gratify them. These I will endeavor to explain with freedom and candor.

In the first place, I fix it as an *indispensible* Measure, that previous to the Disbanding of the Army, all their accounts, should be compleatly liquidated and

settled—and that every person shall be ascertained of the Ballance due to him; and it is *equally essential*, in my opinion, that this Settlement should be effected, with the Army in its collected Body, without any dispersion of the different Lines to their respective States—for in this way the Accounts will be drawn into one view, properly digested upon one general system, and compared with a variety of circumstances, which will require References upon a much easier plan to be dispersed over all the States. The Settlements will be effected with greater ease, in less Time, and with much more œconomy in this, than in a scattered situation. At the same Time jealousies will be removed, the minds of the Army will be impressed with greater Ease and Quiet, and they better prepared, with good opinions and proper Dispositions to fall back into the great Mass of Citizens—

But after Settlement is formed, there remains another Circumstance of more importance still, and without which, it will be of little consequence to have the sums due them ascertained; that is, the Payment of some part of the Ballance. The Distresses of Officers and Soldiers, are now driven to the extreme, and without this provision will not be lessened by the prospect of Dissolution. It is therefore universally expected that three months' pay at least, must be given them before they are disbanded —this Sum it is confidently imagined may be procured and is absolutely indispensable.

They are the rather confirmed in a Belief of the practicability of obtaining it—as the pay of the Army,

has formed great part of the Sum in the Estimates which have been made for the Expences of the War —and altho' this has been obliged to give way to more necessary Claims, yet when those Demands cease, as many will upon the Disbanding the Army—the Pay will then come into view, and have its equal claim to Notice.

They will not however be unreasonable in this Expectation. If the whole cannot be obtained before they are dispersed, the Receipt of one month in Hand, with an absolute assurance of having the other two months in a short Time, will be satisfactory—Should Mr. Morris not be able to assure them the two last Months from the Treasury, it is suggested that it may be obtained in the States, by Drafts from him upon their several Continental Receivers, to be collected by the Individual Officers and Soldiers, out of the last year's Arrears due from the several States apportionments, and for which Taxes have long since been assessed by the Legislatures—This mode, tho' troublesome to the officer, and perhaps inconvenient for the financier, yet from the Necessity of circumstances may be adopted, and might be a means of collecting more Taxes from the people than would in any other way be done. This is only hinted as an Expedient. The Financier will take his own measures. But I repeat it, as an indispensable point, that this Sum at least, must by some means be procured.—Without this provision, it will be absolutely impossible for many to get from Camp, or to return to their friends—and driven to such necessities

it is impossible to foresee what may be the consequences of their not obtaining it. But the worst is to be apprehended.—A Credit, built by their Friends & such others as have been good eno' to supply their wants upon the Expectation of being refunded at the close of the War, out of the large Sums which by their Toils in the course of many Years hard Service, have become due to them from the public, has supported the greatest Number of them to the present Time—and that Debt now remains upon them. But to be disbanded at last, without this little pittance (which is necessary to quit Quarters) like a Sett of Beggars, Needy, distressed and without Prospect, will not only blast the Expectations of their Creditors, and expose the officers to the utmost Indignity and the worst of consequences ;—but will drive every man of Honor and Sensibility to the extremest Horrors of Despair. On the other Hand to give them this Sum, however small in comparison of their Dues, yet, by fulfiling their Expectations, will sweeten their Tempers, cheer their hopes of the future—enable them to submit themselves 'till they can cast about for some future means of Business—it will gratify their pressing Creditors, and will throw the officer back with Ease and Confidence into the Bosom of this Country, and enable him to mix with cordiality and affection among the mass of useful, happy and contented Citizens—an object of the most desirable importance. I cannot at this point of Distance, know the arrangements of the financier, what have been his anticipations, or what his prospects—but

the necessity of fulfilling this Expectation of the Army affects me so exceeding forcibly, that I can not help dwelling upon it, nor is there in my present apprehensions a point of greater consequence or that requires more serious attention. Under this Impression I have thought, if a spirited, pointed, and well adapted Address was framed by Congress, and sent to the States on this Occasion, that Gratitude, Justice, Honor, National Pride, and every Consideration, would operate upon them to strain every Nerve, and exert every endeavor to throw into the Public Treasury, a Sum equal to this Requisition—It cannot be denied, especially when they reflect, how small the Expectation is, compared with the large sum of arrears which is due—and tho' I know that Distinctions are commonly odious, and are looked upon with a jealous and envious Eye—yet it is impossible, that in this case, it can have this operation ; for whatever the feelings of Individuals at large may be in contemplating on their own Demands—yet upon a candid Comparison, every man, even the most interested, will be forced to yield to the superior merit and sufferings of the Soldier, who for a course of Years, has contributed his Services in the field, not only at the Expence of his fortune and former Employment, but at the Risque of Ease, domestic happiness, comfort and even Life. After all these Considerations, how must he be struck with the mediocrity of his demand, when, instead of the Pay due him for four, five, perhaps six years hard earned Toil and Distress, he is content for the present with

receiving three months, only—and is willing to risque the Remainder upon the same Basis of Security, with the general mass of other public Creditors.—

Another Expectation seems to have possessed the minds of the officers. That, as the objects above mentioned are not the only ones which must occupy the attention of Congress, in Connexion with the Army, it may probably be tho't advisable that Congress should send to the Army, a respectable, well-chosen, and well instructed Committee, of their own Body; with liberal Power, to confer with the Army, to know their Sentiments, their Expectations, their Distresses, their Necessities, and the Impossibility of their falling back from the Soldier to Citizenship without some gratification to their most reasonable Demands. This would be considered as a compliment. And to add still greater satisfaction and advantage, it is tho't very advisable, that the Secretary at War, and the Financier should be of this Delegation. Previous to a Dissolution of the Army, many arrangements will doubtless be necessary in both those Departments, to procure a happy and honorable close to the War, and to introduce Peace, with a prospect of National Glory, Stability, and Benefit. It is not for me to dictate, but I should suppose some Peace Establishment will be necessary; some posts will be kept up and garrisoned; Arsenals for the Deposit of Ordnance and Military Stores, will be determined on, and the Stores collected and deposited; arrangements will be necessary for the Discharge of the Army; at what periods and under

what circumstances. The Terms of the Soldiers Service are on different Grounds;—those for the War will suppose and they have a right to do so, their periods of Service to expire at the Close of War, and Proclamation of Peace. What period shall be fixed for these? The Levy men may be retained while the British force remain in our Country if it shall be judged advisable. If I am not consulted in these matters, it will be necessary for me to have an early Knowledge of the Intentions of Congress on these and many other points. But I can think of no mode so effectual as the one suggested of a Committee accompanied by the Financier and Secretary at War. Plans which to us appear feasible and practicable, may be attended with insurmountable difficulties. On the other hand measures may be adopted at Philadelphia which cannot be carried into execution. But here in the manner proposed something might be hit upon which would accommodate itself to the Ideas of both, with greater Ease and Satisfaction, than may now be expected, and which could not be effected by writing Quires of paper, and spending a Length of Time.—

Upon the whole, you will be able to collect from the foregoing Sentiments what are the Expectations of the Army—that they will involve compleat Settlement and partial payment *previous* to any Dispersion. (This they suppose may be done within the Time that they must necessarily remain together.) Upon the fulfillment of these two, they will readily retire, in full assurance that ample Security at the earliest period,

note

and on the best ground it can be had will be obtained for the Remainder of their Ballances.

If the Idea of a Committee to right the Army should not be adopted,—and you find it necessary to pass any further Resolutions, you will easily collect from the foregoing Sentiments what will be satisfactory—without my troubling you any further—I pray you to communicate the Contents of this Letter to Colo. Hamilton, from whom I received a request similar to yours. I have &c.[1]

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

NEWBURG, 4 April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

* * * I read your private letter of the 25th with pain, and contemplated the picture it had drawn with astonishment and horror. But I will yet hope for the best. The idea of redress by force is too chimerical to have had a place in the imagination of any serious

[1] Early in April, and some days before this letter reached Bland, Congress appointed a committee consisting of Madison, Osgood, Wilson, Ellsworth, and Hamilton, the last-named being chairman, to consider what arrangements it would be proper to adopt in the different departments with reference to a peace. On the 9th, Hamilton informed Washington of such a committee, and wished for his "sentiments at large on such institutions of every kind for the interior defence of these States as may be best adapted to their circumstances, and conciliate security with economy and with the principles of our government. In this they will be glad if you will take as great latitude as you may think necessary." Washington asked for the opinion of all the principal officers in camp, and also of Governor Clinton. Several of them presented memoirs of considerable length, entering into comprehensive and detailed views of what was called a *peace establishment*. From these papers a letter was framed extending to twenty-five folio pages, which was forwarded by the Commander-in-chief to the committee of Congress.

mind in this army; but there is no telling what unhappy disturbances may result from distress, and distrust of justice, and as far as the fears and jealousies of the army are alive, I hope no resolution will be come to for disbanding or separating the lines till the accts. are liquidated. You may rely upon it, Sir, that unhappy consequences would follow the attempt. The suspicions of the officers are afloat, notwithstanding the resolutions which have passed on both sides. Any act, therefore, which can be construed with an attempt to separate them before the accts. are settled will convey the most unfavorable ideas of the rectitude of Congress—whether well or ill founded, the consequences will be the same.

I will now, in strict confidence, mention a matter which may be useful for you to be informed of. It is that some men (and leading ones too) in this army, are beginning to entertain suspicions that Congress, or some members of it, regardless of the past sufferings and present distress, maugre the justice which is due to them, and the returns which a grateful people should make to men who certainly have contributed more than any other class to the establishment of Independency, are to be made use of as mere puppets to establish continental funds, and that rather than not succeed in this measure, or weaken their ground, they would make a sacrifice of the army and all its interests.

I have two reasons for mentioning this matter to you. The one is, that the army (considering the irritable state it is in, its sufferings and composition)

is a dangerous instrument to play with; the other, that every possible means consistent with their own views (which certainly are moderate) should be essayed, to get it disbanded without delay. I might add a third: it is, that the Financier is suspected to be at the bottom of this scheme. If sentiments of this sort should become general, their operation will be opposed to this plan; at the same time that it would increase the present discontents. Upon the whole, disband the army as soon as possible, but consult the wishes of it, which really are moderate in the mode, and perfectly compatible with the honor, dignity and justice which is due from the country to it. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QRS., NEWBURG, 5 April, 1783.

MY DEAR MARQS.,

It is easier for you to conceive, than for me to express, the sensibility of my heart at the communications in your letter of the 5th of Feb. from Cadiz. It is to these communications we are indebted for the only accts. yet recd. of a general Pacification. My mind, upon the receipt of this news, was instantly assailed by a thousand ideas, all of them contending for preëminence; but, believe me, my dear friend, none could supplant, or ever will eradicate that gratitude, which has arisen from a lively sense of the conduct of your nation, and from my obligations to many of the illustrious characters of it, among whom, (I do not mean to flatter, when I place you at the head,) and

from my admiration of the Virtues of your August Sovereign, who, at the same time that he stands confessed the Father of his own people, and defender of American rights, has given the most exalted example of moderation in treating with his Enemies.

We stand, now, an Independent People, and have yet to learn political Tactics. We are placed among the nations of the Earth, and have a character to establish; but how we shall acquit ourselves, time must discover. The probability (at least I fear it), is that local or State politics will interfere too much with the more liberal and extensive plan of government, which wisdom and foresight, freed from the mist of prejudice, would dictate; and that we shall be guilty of many blunders in treading this boundless theatre, before we shall have arrived at any perfection in this art; in a word, that the experience, which is purchased at the price of difficulties and distress, will alone convince us that the honor, power, and true Interest of this Country must be measured by a Continental scale, and that every departure therefrom weakens the Union, and may ultimately break the band which holds us together. To avert these evils, to form a Constitution, that will give consistency, stability, and dignity to the Union, and sufficient powers to the great Council of the nation for general purposes, is a duty which is incumbent upon every man, who wishes well to his Country, and will meet with my aid as far as it can be rendered in the private walks of life: for hence forward my mind shall be unbent and I will endeavor to glide gently down the stream of life till

I come to that abyss from whence no traveller is permitted to return.

The armament, wch. was preparing at Cadiz, and in which you were to have acted a distinguished part, would have carried such conviction with it, that it is not to be wondered at, that Great Britain should have been impressed with the force of such reasoning. To this cause, I am persuaded, the Peace is to be ascribed. Your going to Madrid from thence, instead of coming immediately to this Country, is another instance, my dear Marquis, of your zeal for the American Cause, and lays a fresh claim to the gratitude of her Sons, who will at all times receive you with open arms.[1] As no official despatches are yet received, either at Phila. or New York, of the completion of the treaty, nor any measures taken for the reduction of the army, my detention there-with is quite uncertain. To say then (at this time) where I may be, at the epoch for your intended visit to this continent, is too vague even for conjecture ; but nothing can be more true, than that the pleasure, with which I

[1] Although the Spanish government, by the signature of the treaty of general peace at Paris, had assented to the independence of the United States, yet the king was not inclined to receive a person from America in a public diplomatic character at his court. After the declaration of peace, Mr. Carmichael, who had been Secretary of Legation under Mr. Jay, was appointed Chargé d'Affaires from the United States to Spain. He was already in Madrid, having remained there after Mr. Jay's departure. The Spanish court declined receiving him in his public capacity. He wrote to the Marquis de Lafayette, who was then at Cadiz, and requested his aid. The Marquis repaired to Madrid, had an interview with the king, and with the principal minister, Count de Florida Blanca, and succeeded in procuring a recognition of Mr. Carmichael's powers as Chargé d'Affaires from the United States. The conduct of the Marquis de Lafayette on this occasion was highly approved by Congress. See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. x., pp. 24–39.

shall receive you, will be equal to your wishes. I shall be better able to determine *then*, than now, on the practicability of accompanying you to France, a Country to which I shall ever feel a warm affection; and, if I do not pay it that tribute of respect, which is to be derived from a visit it may be ascribed with more justice to any other cause, than a want of inclination, or the pleasure of going there under the auspices of your friendship.

I have already observed, that the determinations of Congress, if they have come to any, respecting the army, is yet unknown to me. But, as you wish to be informed of *every thing* that concerns it, I do, for your satisfaction, transmit authentic documents of some very interesting occurrences, which have happened within the last Six months. But I ought first to have premised, that, from accumulated sufferings and little or no prospect of relief, the discontents of the officers last Fall put on the threatening appearance of a total resignation, till the business was diverted into the channel, which produced the Address and Petition to Congress, which stand first on the file herewith enclosed. I shall make no comment on these proceedings. To one so well acquainted with the sufferings of the American army as you are, it is unnecessary. It will be sufficient to observe, that the more the Virtue and forbearance of it are tried, the more resplendent it appears. My hope is, that the military exit of this valuable class of the community will exhibit such a proof of *amor patriæ*, as will do them honor in the page of history.

These papers, with my last letter, (which was intended to go by Colo. Gouvion, containing extensive details of military Plans,) will convey to you every information I can give in the present uncertainty worthy of attention. If you should get sleepy and tired of reading them, recollect, for my exculpation, that it is in compliance with your request I have run into such prolixity. I made a proper use of the confidential part of your Letter of the 5th of Feby.

The scheme, my dear Marqs., which you propose as a precedent to encourage the emancipation of the black people of this Country from that state of Bondage in wch. they are held, is a striking evidence of the benevolence of your Heart. I shall be happy to join you in so laudable a work; but will defer going into a detail of the business, till I have the pleasure of seeing you.

Lord Stirling is no more. He died at Albany in Jany. last, very much regretted. Colo. Barber was snatched from us about the same time, in a way equally unexpected, sudden, and distressing; leaving many friends to bemoan his fate.[1]

Tilghman is on the point of matrimony with a namesake and cousin, sister to Mrs. Carroll of Baltimore. It only remains for me now, my dear Marqs.,

[1] Colonel Francis Barber was accidentally killed, while riding near the camp, by a falling tree, which a soldier was cutting. He was buried at New Windsor, on the 13th of February, with every mark of respect from the Commander-in-chief and the army. He had served through the war, and acquired the reputation, not more of an intelligent and brave officer, than of a man of estimable private qualities, possessing the confidence and esteem of the superior officers, and the affectionate attachment of his associates. An intimacy and friendship had subsisted between him and Lafayette.—*Sparks.*

to make a tender of my respectful compliments, in which Mrs. Washington unites, to Madame Lafayette, and to wish you, her, and your little offspring, all the happiness this life can afford. I will extend my compliments to the gentlemen with whom I have the honor of an acquaintance in your circle. I need not add how happy I shall be to see you in America, and more particularly at Mount Vernon, or with what truth and warmth of affection I am, &c.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 9 April, 1783.

SIR,

I feel great satisfaction from your Excellency's despatches by Captain Stapleton, conveying to me the joyful annunciation of your having received official accounts of the conclusion of hostilities. Without official authority from Congress, but perfectly relying on your communication, I can at this time only issue my orders to the American out-posts, to suspend all acts of hostilities until further orders. This shall be instantly done; and I shall be happy in the momentary expectation of having it in my power to publish to the American army a general cessation of all hostilities between Great Britain and America.[1]

[1] "Official accounts of the happy conclusion of a Peace have been transmitted by Sir Guy Carleton to General Haldimand at Quebec by his officers who passed thro' this place a few days since, but as a very considerable time must elapse before these Gentlemen can arrive at Quebec and the news be communicated from thence to the British posts in the upper country, and as humanity dictates that not a moment should be lost in endeavoring to prevent any further incursions of the Indians (who it is said have already struck at Wyoming),

To your observations respecting particular articles of the peace I am obliged to reply, that it rests with Congress to direct measures for the observance of all the articles contained in the provisional treaty. You may be assured, that, as soon as I receive my instructions from the sovereign power of the United States I shall rejoice in giving every facility in my power to carry into complete execution that article of the treaty, which respects the restitution of all prisoners of war, being perfectly disposed to contribute to diffusing, as much as possible, the happy effects of this great event.

I thank your Excellency for the assurances you are pleased to express, of your readiness to cultivate that spirit of perfect good will and conciliation, which you wish would take place between the King of Great Britain and the United States, and the citizens and subjects of both countries; and I beg, Sir, that you will please to accept a tender from me of reciprocal good will and attention, accompanied with sincere congratulations on this joyful restoration of peace and general tranquillity, with an earnest wish, that, resting on the firm basis of mutual interest and good will, it may prove as lasting as it is happy.

I have the honor to be, &c.

I have thought it proper to write to General McLean, commanding the British Force in that quarter, and to inclose to him the King of Great Britain's Proclamation for the cessation of Hostilities, and this Letter I must direct you to forward to him at Niagara by some trusty Indian runner with all possible expedition—the expense attending this business shall be repaid on your informing me of it.

"You will at the same time, give orders to the troops and Indians under your command to forbear all Acts of Hostility against the troops of his Brittanic Majesty other than for their own immediate defence."—*Washington to Colonel Marinus Willet*, 14 April, 1783.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, IN CONGRESS.

NEWBURG, 16 April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

My last letter to you was written in a hurry, when I was fatigued by the more public yet confidential letter, which, with several others, accompanied it. Possibly I did not on that occasion express myself, in what I intended as a hint, with so much perspicuity as I ought. Possibly, too, what I then dropped might have conveyed more than I intended, for I do not now recollect ye force of my expression.

My meaning, however, was only to inform you, that there were different sentiments in the army, as well as in Congress, respecting Continental and State Funds, some wishing to be thrown upon their respective States, rather than the Continent at large, for payment; and that, if an idea should generally prevail, that Congress, or part of its members or ministers, bent upon the latter, should *delay* doing them justice, or *hazard* it in pursuit of their favorite object, it might create such divisions in the army, as would weaken rather than strengthen the hands of those, who were disposed to support Continental measures, and might tend to defeat the end they themselves had in view, by endeavoring to interest the army.

For these reasons I said, or meant to say, the army was a dangerous Engine to work with, as it might be made to cut both ways; and, considering the sufferings of it, wld. more than probably throw its weight into that scale, which seemed most likely to preponderate towards its immediate relief, without looking, (under the pressure of necessity,) to future conse-

quences with the eyes of Politicians. In this light, also, I meant to apply my observation to Mr. Morris, to whom, or rather to Mr. G. M., is ascribed in a great degree the groundwork of the superstructure, which was intended to be raised in the army by the anonymous addresser.[1]

That no man can be more opposed to State funds or local prejudices than myself, the whole tenor of my conduct has been one continual evidence of. No man, perhaps, has had better opportunities to *see* and *feel* the pernicious tendency of the latter than I have; and I endeavor (I hope not altogether ineffectually) to inculcate this upon the officers of the army, upon all proper occasions; but their feelings are to be attended to and soothed, and they must be assured, that, if Continental funds cannot be established, they will be recommended to their respective States for payment. Justice must be done them.

I should do injustice to report and what I believe to be the opinion of the army, were I not to inform you, that they consider you as a friend, zealous to serve them, and one who has espoused their interests in Congress upon every proper occasion. It is to be wished, as I observed in my letter to Colo. Bland, that Congress would send a Comee. to the Army with plenipo. powers. The matters requested of me in your letter of the [9th] as Chairman of a Committee, and many other things, might then be brought to a

[1] Gouverneur Morris was strongly opposed to the officers looking to the individual States for redress. He was in favor of Continental funds, and believed these could be obtained by the united efforts of the public creditors and the army.—*Morris to Greene*, 15 February, 1783.

close with more despatch and in a happier manner, than it is likely they will be by an intercourse of Letters at the distance of 150 miles, which takes *our* Expresses a week *at least* to go and return. At this moment, being without any instructions from Congress, I am under great embarrassment with respect to the Soldiers for the war, and shall be obliged *more than probably*, from the necessity of the case, to exercise my own judgment, without waiting for orders as to the discharge of them. If I should adopt measures, which events will approve, *all will be well;* if otherwise, "*Why, and by what authority, did you do so?*"

How far a *strong* recommendation from Congress to observe *all* the articles of peace as well as the[1]

may imply a suspicion of good faith in the People of this Country, I pretend not to judge; but I am much mistaken if something of the kind will not be found wanting, as I already perceive a disposition to carp at and to elude such parts of the treaty, as affect different Interests, altho' you do not find a man, who, when pushed, will not agree, that, upon the whole, it is a more advantageous Peace than we could possibly have expected. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 18 April, 1783.

SIR,

I find it a duty incumbent on me to communicate to your Excellency the present disposition and temper of part of the army. The accounts of peace,

[1] Referring probably to some particular article. The blank is not filled in the draft.

which have been received at different times, have raised an expectation in the minds of the men engaged *for the war*, that a speedy discharge must be the consequence. This idea has been so deeply impressed, that it has become difficult to hold them under that sense of discipline, which is necessary to bind together the subjects of an army. The slow and dillatory manner, in which the intelligence of peace has arrived to us, has served to heighten this idea, and has led those men to some suspicion, that official despatches and official declarations of peace have been postponed through design, that they might be held beyond the term of their engagements ; by which means they have in some instances scarcely been restrained from acts of excess. To such a composition of men as the army is formed of, this idea is perhaps not an unnatural one.

In this situation the proclamation of Congress for a cessation of hostilities found us on its arrival yesterday. This act, being unaccompanied with any instructions for my conduct respecting the discharge of this part of the army if it should be found necessary, or any intimations of Congress on that head, has thrown me into a most disagreeable circumstance. Knowing the temper of the *war-men*, to suppress the publication of this proclamation would increase their suspicions ; and knowing their expectations, to publish it to men, who have not learnt to distinguish between a proclamation for a cessation of hostilities and a definite declaration of peace, when they have authentic information that peace has actually taken

place, would serve to increase their expectations of immediate discharge, and stamp any claim to their further services with an appearance of injustice. Under this dilemma, and being totally ignorant of the designs of the enemy in New York, who, from all I can collect, are making no show of an early evacuation of that city, I found it difficult to decide on the line of my duty. I therefore called a full consultation of the general officers of this army on the occasion. It was their unanimous judgment, that it would be equally impracticable and impolitic to attempt to suppress the proclamation, and that it should be issued in this day's orders. At the same time, the general officers are deeply impressed with an idea of the little remaining hold, which, after this publication, we may expect to have upon the *men engaged for the war*, and of the necessity there is, that Congress should come to some speedy determination upon this interesting point, as to what is to be the period of these men's service, and that they should give the earliest communication to me of their decision for my instruction.

Towards effecting this important object, it has been seriously motioned to me, that I should hint to Congress the propriety and expediency of their appointing a committee of their own body, with plenary powers, who may immediately repair to camp, and who may decide on the necessary arrangements for this important period. For my own part, I am fully in sentiment with this opinion, as such a measure would not only tend to help over the difficulty of the moment,

but would expedite the execution of many other arrangements, which will be found necessarily, preparatory to our disbanding the present army. It might also serve to facilitate any negotiations, which it may be found expedient to enter into with Sir Guy Carleton, for his speedy evacuation of New York, an object which at present seems at too great a distance for our circumstances. Many other matters will undoubtedly present themselves which we cannot foresee, and which will require frequent references to Congress; and, as much time is lost in communications between the army and the sovereign body, a committee on the spot, who might give an immediate decision, would be of great importance, and perhaps suppress many disagreeable consequences which might arise merely from delay. One circumstance has already occurred, as Congress will perceive by the enclosed petition from the troops of the New Jersey line; another I have this day heard of in the Connecticut line, extending to a claim of half-pay or commutation for the *non*-commissioned officers of that line. How far their ideas, if not suppressed by some lucky expedient, may proceed, it is beyond my power to divine.

Notwithstanding the length of this letter, I must beg the liberty to suggest to Congress an idea, which has been hinted to me, and which has affected my mind very forcibly. That is, that, at the discharge of the *men* engaged *for the war*, Congress should suffer those men, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, to take with them as their own property, and as a gratuity, the arms and accoutrements they now hold. This act would raise pleasing sensations in the minds of those

worthy and faithful men, who, from their early engaging in the war at moderate bounties, and from their patient continuance under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly of their country, but have obtained an honorable distinction over those, who, with shorter times, have gained large pecuniary rewards. This act, at a comparative small expense, would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to those distinguished worthies, and the sense they have had of their suffering virtues and services, which have been so happily instrumental towards the security and establishment of the rights, liberties, and independence of this rising empire. These constant companions of their toils and dangers, preserved with sacred care, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children, as honorable badges of bravery and military merit; and would probably be brought forth, on some future occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory.[1]

Congress will suffer me to repeat my most earnest

[1] "You mention in your letter that tho' your business in France is of a mercantile nature, it is your intention to travel in regimentals. On this I cannot help remarking, that there may be an impropriety in your appearing in a military dress when the war shall have ceased and the United States shall no longer have an army existing, and besides, to those acquainted with the country you are going to, it is well known that the military and the mercantile character is there totally different and inconsistent with each other; and however respectable the latter may be here, in France it is even deemed disgraceful for an officer to engage in commerce of any kind."—*Washington to Colonel Matthias Ogden*, 19 April, 1783.

wish, that they will be pleased, either by themselves at large, or by their committee, to pay their earliest attention to the matters now referred to their consideration; for I must add, that, unless the most speedy arrangements for the *war men* are adopted, I contemplate with anxiety the disagreeable consequences, which, I fear, will be the result of much longer delay.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read 21 April. This letter was referred to a committee, Osgood, Bland, Hamilton, Madison, and Peters, in conformity with whose report it was resolved that, in the opinion of Congress, the time of service of the men engaged for the war did not expire till the ratification of the definitive articles of peace; that those continuing in the service till that time should be allowed their arms and accoutrements; but that, nevertheless, discretion should be left with the Commander-in-chief to grant furloughs, or discharges, to those men, as he should judge most expedient.—*Journals*, April 23d.

A committee of Congress, composed of Hamilton, Peters, and Gorham, presented on the 23d of May a report recommending the discharge of all the non-commissioned officers and soldiers enlisted for the war. Madison, supported by Carroll, sought to have the report re-committed, but failed; and Williamson, seconded by Carroll, proposed that furloughs be granted to the men by the commander-in-chief, to be followed by a final discharge on the conclusion of a definitive peace. The southern members were solidly opposed to granting a discharge, and their votes, with Pennsylvania and Rhode Island lost by division, defeated the committee's proposition. Three days after, the resolution to grant furloughs was taken up and passed, being a compromise between those who wished to get rid of the expense of keeping the men in the field, and those who thought it impolitic to disband the army whilst the British remained in the United States. Morris, who had urged the disbanding of the army, plainly telling Congress that the means of paying it even in paper would soon be gone, issued notes payable in six months, asked the States to receive them in payment of taxes, and with these paid off the army.

It was then resolved, "That the Commander-in-chief be *instructed* to grant furloughs to the non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the United States enlisted to serve during the war, who shall be discharged as soon as the definitive treaty of peace is concluded, together with a proportionable number of commissioned officers of the different grades; and that the secretary at war and the Commander-in-chief take the proper measures for conducting those troops to their respective homes, in such a manner as may be most convenient to themselves and to the States through which they may pass; and that the men thus furloughed be allowed to take their arms with them."—May 26th.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 21 April, 1783.

SIR,

I have the satisfaction of enclosing to your Excellency a proclamation, which I have received from the sovereign power of the United States, ordering a general cessation of hostilities, as well by sea as land, with directions that the same should be published to all their subjects under my command. In compliance with these instructions, the same was made public in the American camp on the 19th, with my orders that it should be made known at all the out-posts of the American army as soon as possible.[1]

In consequence of this declaration, and in conformity to the articles of the treaty, Congress have been pleased to pass their resolutions of the 15th instant, directing arrangements to be formed for the liberation of all prisoners, and other purposes, which your Excellency will collect from the enclosed copy, which I transmit for your observation.

In a conference, which I had yesterday with the minister at war, agreeably to the terms of the above-mentioned resolutions, it has been agreed between us, that the land prisoners should be liberated as soon as

[1] The proclamation for a cessation of hostilities was agreed upon and adopted in Congress on the 11th of April. It is observable, that it was published in camp precisely eight years from the date of the first act of hostility at Lexington. General Heath describes the ceremony as follows:

"*April 19th.* At noon the proclamation of Congress for a cessation of hostilities was proclaimed at the door of the New Building, followed by three huzzas; after which a prayer was made by the Reverend Mr. Ganno, and an anthem (*Independence*, from Billings,) was performed by vocal and instrumental music."—*Memoirs*, p. 371.

possible, and that orders should be immediately given for commencing their march towards New York. But as their situation, by being removed to the interior of the country, is far distant from New York, which will make their march disagreeable and long, we have agreed to submit it to your option, whether to have them marched the whole distance through the country or to have them delivered at the nearest water, where it may be convenient for your ships to receive them. Should you choose the latter, the following arrangement has been determined. The prisoners, who are lodged at Fredericktown and Winchester, in the States of Virginia and Maryland, in number about fifteen hundred, including women and children, will begin their march on the route towards Baltimore, where they may arrive on the 10th of May; at which time, should your ships be ready to receive them there, they may be embarked, and proceed to New York. If ships are not directed to receive them at the time mentioned at Baltimore, they will proceed by land to the Delaware. The remainder of the prisoners, being in Pennsylvania, amounting to about four thousand five hundred, may all (except those at Reading, between three and four hundred,) be embarked at Philadelphia, and also those from Fredericktown and Winchester, should they not be received at Baltimore, provided your ships are there by the 5th of May at farthest. Should ships not be ordered by your Excellency to take them by water, they will be marched in convenient detachments of about five hundred each, through the country to Elizabethtown, with all convenient expedition. In any case, those from Read-

ing, being in the upper part of Pennsylvania, will march directly to Elizabethtown.

It is also submitted to your option to send or not, as you shall think proper, an additional number of officers to attend the march of the prisoners through the country, and to prevent any irregularities that disorderly persons may be disposed to commit.

In either alternative respecting the receipt of the prisoners, you will be pleased to give the earliest information, to the minister at war in Philadelphia, of your determinations, that he may be able to make the necessary and timely dispositions to pay all proper attention to your choice. To expedite this purpose, and for the convenience of transportation, I enclose a passport for such officers as you shall think proper to charge with your despatches on this occasion.

Respecting the other subjects contained in the enclosed resolution of Congress, as they may be discussed with more precision and despatch by a personal interview between your Excellency and myself, at some convenient time and intermediate place, such as may be agreed upon between your Excellency and Colonel Humphreys, my aid-de-camp, who will have the honor to deliver this letter, I would only suggest, that, in point of time, the earliest day you can name will be most agreeable to me. Should an interview be consented to on your part, the governor of this State, being particularly interested in any arrangements, which respect the restitution of the post of New York, will attend me on this occasion. I am, &c.[1]

[1] To the principal points in this letter, Sir Guy Carleton wrote in reply:

"Considering the quantity of tonnage necessary for the evacuation of this

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

NEWBURG, 22 April, 1783.

DEAR SIR:

I did not receive your letter of the 15th till after my return from Ringwood, where I had a meeting with the secretary at war for the purpose of making arrangements for the release of our prisoners, agreeably to the resolve of Congress of the 15th Inst.

Finding a diversity of opinion respecting the treaty, and the line of conduct we ought to observe with the prisoners, I requested, in precise terms to know from Gene. Lincoln (before I entered on the business) whether we were to exercise our own judgment with respect to the *time*, as well as *mode* of releasing them, or was to be confined to the latter. Being informed that we had no option in the first, Congress wishing to be eased of the expence as soon as possible, I acted *solely* on that ground.

At the same time I scruple not to confess to you, that if this measure was not dictated by necessity, it is, in my opinion an impolitic one; as we place ourselves in the power of the British, before the treaty is definitive. The manner in which peace was first announced, & the subsequent declarations of it, have

place, and that most part of what we have at hand is now actually employed in this business, and in the removing of incumbrances, which must be sent off previous to our departure, I am reduced to the necessity of adopting the march of those prisoners by land; and I shall accordingly avail myself of your Excellency's passport, and acquaint the minister at war of the choice I am obliged to make, and the reasons of it. I cannot decline the personal interview proposed by your Excellency, and purpose being in a frigate as near Tappan as may be, where I understand you mean to lodge. If I hear nothing from you to occasion an alteration, I intend being up, on the 5th of May, accompanied by a smaller vessel or two, for the accommodation of Lieutenant-Governor Elliot, Chief Justice William Smith, and part of my family."—New York, April 24th.

led the country & army into a belief that it was final. The ratification of the preliminary articles on the 3d of February, so far confirmed this, that one consequence resulting from it is, the soldiers for the war conceive the term of their services has actually expired; and I believe it is not in the power of Congress or their officers, to hold them much, if any, longer; for we are obliged at this moment to increase our guards to prevent rioting; and the insults which the officers meet with in attempting to hold them to their duty. The proportion of these men amount to seven-elevenths of the army. These we shall loose at the moment the British army receive, by their prisoners, an augmentation of five or 6000 men.

It is not for me to investigate the causes which induced this measure; nor the policy of those letters (from authority) which gave the tone to the present sentiment. But since they have been adopted, we ought, in my opinion, to put a good face upon matters; and by a liberal conduct throughout on our part (freed from appearances of distrust) try if we cannot excite similar dispositions on theirs. Indeed circumstanced as things *now* are, I wish most fervently that all the troops which are not retained for a peace establishment were to be discharged immediately, or such of them, at least, as do not incline to await the settlement of their accts. If they continue here, their claims, I can plainly perceive, will increase, and our perplexities multiply. A petition is this moment handed to me from the non-comd. officers of the Connecticut line soliciting half pay. It is well drawn, I am told, but I did not read it. I sent it back without

appearing to understand the contents, because it did not come through the channel of their officers. This may be followed by others and I mention it to show the necessity, the absolute necessity, of discharging the *warsmen* as soon as possible.

I have taken much pains to support Mr. Morris's administration in the army, and in proportion to its numbers I believe he had not more friends anywhere. But if he will neither adopt the mode which has been suggested, point out any other, nor show cause why the first is either impracticable or impolitic (I have heard he objects to it) they will certainly attribute their disappointment to a lukewarmness in him, or some design incompatible with their interests. And here, my dear Colo. Hamilton, let me assure you that it would not be more difficult to still the raging billows in a tempestuous gale, than to convince the officers of this army of the justice or policy of paying men in civil offices full wages, when *they* cannot obtain a sixtieth part of their dues. I am not unapprised of the arguments which are made use of upon this occasion, to discriminate the cases; but they really are futile; and may be summed up in this: that tho' both are contending for the same rights & expect equal benefits, yet, both cannot submit to the same inconveniences to obtain them; otherwise, to adopt the language of simplicity and plainness, a ration of salt pork, with or without pease, as the case often is, would support the one as well as the other, & in such a struggle as ours would, in my opinion, be alike honorable in both.

My anxiety to get home increases with the prospect of it, but when is it to happen? I have not heard that Congress have yet had under consideration the lands and other gratuities, which at different periods of the war have been promised to the army. Does not these things evince the necessity of a committee's repairing to camp, in order to arrange & adjust matters without spending time in a tedious exchange of letters. Unless something of this kind is adopted, business will be delayed & expences accumulated, or the army will break up in disorder, go home enraged, complaining of injustice & committing enormities on the innocent inhabitants in every direction.

I write to you unreservedly. If, therefore, contrary to my apprehension all these matters are in a proper train, & Mr. Morris has devised means to give the army three months' pay, you will, I am persuaded, excuse my precipitancy and sollicitude, by ascribing it to an earnest wish to see the war happily & honorably terminated; to my anxious desire of enjoying some repose, & the necessity of my paying a little attention to my private concerns, which have suffered considerably in eight years' absence. * * *

TO TENCH TILGHMAN.

NEWBURG, 24 April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I receiv'd with much pleasure the kind congratulations contained in your letter of the 25th ulto. from Phila. on the honble. termination of the War.—No

man, indeed, can relish the approaching Peace with more heartfelt, and grateful satisfaction than myself. A mind always upon the stretch, and tortured with a deversity of perplexing circumstances, needed a respite; and I anticipate the pleasure of a little repose. It has been happy for me, always, to have Gentlemen about me willing to share my troubles, and help me out of difficulties—to none of these can I attribute a greater share of merit than to you.

I can scarce form an idea at this moment, when I shall be able to leave this place. The distresses of the Army for want of money; the embarrassments of Congress, and the consequent delays, and disappointments on all sides, encompass me with difficulties; and produce every day some fresh source of uneasiness. But as I now see the port opening to which I have been steering, I shall persevere till I have gained the entrance of it. I will then leave the States to improve their present Constitution, so as to make that Peace and Independency, which we have fought for and obtained, a blessing to the millions yet unborn. But to do this, liberallity must supply the place of prejudice, and unreasonable jealousies must yield to that confidence which *ought* to be placed in the Sovereign power of these States. In a word, the Constitution of Congress must be competent to the *general purposes* of Government, and of such a nature as to bind us together. Otherwise we shall be like a rope of Sand, and as easily broken; and may in a short time, become the sport of European Politics even if we should be disposed to Peace among ourselves.

From the intimation in your Letter, and what I have heard from others, I presume this Letter will find you in a state of Wedlock.—On this happy event I pray you, and your Lady, to accept of my best wishes, and sincerest congratulations in which Mrs. Washington joins hers most cordially. With &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 3 May, 1783.

SIR,

I take the liberty to mention to your Excellency, that, in attending to the resolutions of Congress of the 15th of April, respecting the posts in the United States occupied by the British troops, I find it necessary to apply for a more particular explanation of the intentions of Congress than is there expressed.[1]

Taking it for granted, that the northern and western posts are included within the ideas of Congress, as well as New York, arrangements for receiving possession of those posts are to be made with General Haldimand, who commands in the district of Canada. As the communication with him is distant and will take much time, previous to commencing this correspondence it will be requisite that I should be as fully instructed as circumstances will admit, of the intentions of Congress respecting these frontier posts;

[1] By a resolve of the 15th of April, the Commander-in-chief was instructed to make arrangements with the British commander for receiving possession of the posts held by the British troops in the United States, and for obtaining the delivery of all negroes and other property, which by the treaty were to be given up. It was also resolved that the Secretary at War, in conjunction with the Commander-in-chief, should concert measures for liberating all the land prisoners. They had recently met at Ringwood for this purpose.

particularly what footing they are to be placed upon, and what number of men shall be sent to maintain them upon the peace establishment. Congress will also be impressed with the necessity of adopting the earliest measures possible for procuring the men, for garrisoning those posts. Whether this shall be effected by detaching the *three* years' men of the present army, or furnishing them in some other manner, will be also to determine.

The posts should certainly be occupied by the United States troops the moment they are evacuated by the British. Should this be neglected, I have my fears, that they may be burned or destroyed by the Indians, or some other evil-minded persons, whose disaffection to the government of the United States may lead them to such enormities.

Arrangements for transporting the necessary artillery, stores, ammunition, and provisions, will require time, and need immediate attention. The season for doing this work is now at hand; and if suffered to pass off, it will be exceedingly difficult if not impracticable to effect their transportation, particularly through the small water communications, which in the present season will be found very convenient, but which the summer heats will render so low, as to become almost impassable.

Persuaded that Congress will view these subjects in the same important light that I do, I promise myself that I shall be favored with their instructions at the earliest moment possible. I am, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, May 6th.

SUBSTANCE OF THE CONFERENCE BETWEEN GEN. WASHINGTON AND SIR GUY CARLETON, AT AN INTERVIEW AT ORANGETOWN, 6TH MAY, 1783.

General Washington opened the Conference by observing that he heretofore had transmitted to Sir Guy Carleton the resolutions of Congress of the 15th ulto, that he conceived a personal Conference would be the most speedy & satisfactory mode of discussing and settling the Business; and that therefore he had requested the Interview—That the resolutions of Congress related to three distinct matters, namely, the setting at Liberty the prisoners, the receiving possession of the posts occupied by the British Troops, and the obtaing. the Delivery of all Negroes & other property of the Inhabitants of these States in the possession of the Forces or subjects of, or adherents to his Britannic Majesty.—That with respect to the Liberation of the prisoners, he had, as far as the Business rested with him, put it in Train, by meetg. & conferring with the Secretary at War, & concertg. with him the proper measures for collecting the prisoners & forwarding them to N. York, and that it was to be optional with Sir Guy, whether the prisoners should march by land, or whether he would send Transports to convey them by Water—and that the Secty. at War was to communicate with Sir Guy Carleton on the subject & obtain his Determination.

With respect to the other two Matters which were the Objects of the Resolutions, General Washington requested the Sentiments of General Carleton.

Sir Guy then observed that his Expectations of a peace had been such that he had anticipated the Event by very early commencing his preparations to withdraw the British Troops from this Country—and that every preparation which his situation & circumstances would permit was still continued—That an additional Number of Transports, and which were expected, were necessary to remove the Troops & Stores—and as it was impossible to ascertain the Time when the Transports would arrive, their passages depending on the casualties of the Seas, he was therefore unable to fix a determinate period within which the British

forces would be withdrawn from the City of New York—But that it was his desire to exceed even our own Wishes in this Respect, & That he was using every means in his power to effect with all possible despatch an Evacuation of that & every other post within the United States, occupied by the British Troops, under his Direction—That he considered as included in the preparations for the final Departure of the B. Troops, the previously sending away those persons, who supposed that, from the part they had taken in the present War, it would be most eligible for them to leave the Country—and that upwards of 6,000 persons of this Character had embarked & sailed—and that in this Embarkation a Number of Negroes were comprised—General Washington therefore expressed his Surprize, that after what appeared to him an express Stipulation to the contrary in the Treaty, Negroes the property of the Inhabitants of these States should be sent off.

To which Sir Guy Carleton replied, that he wished to be considered as giving no construction of the Treaty—That by *Property* in the Treaty might only be intended Property *at the Time*, the Negroes were sent off—That there was a difference in the Mode of Expression in the Treaty ; Archives, Papers, &c., &c., were to be *restored*—Negroes & other property were only not to be destroyed or *carried away*. But he principally insisted that he conceived it could not have been the Intention of the B. Government by the Treaty of Peace, to reduce themselves to the necessity of violating their faith to the Negroes who came into the British Lines under the proclamation of his Predecessors in Command—That he forebore to express his sentiments on the propriety of those proclamations, but that delivering up the Negroes to their former Masters would be delivering them up some possibly to Execution, and others to severe punishments, which in his Opinion would be a dishonorable violation of the public Faith, pledged to the Negroes in the proclamations—That if the sending off the Negroes should hereafter be declared an Infraction of the Treaty, Compensation must be made by the Crown of G. Britain to the Owners—that he had taken measures to provide for this, by directing a Register to be kept of all the Negroes who were sent off, specifying the Name, Age & Occupation of the

person, and the Name, & Place of Residence of his former Master. Genl. Washington again observed that he conceived this Conduct on the part of Genl. Carleton, a Departure from both the Letter and the Spirit of the Articles of Peace ;—and particularly mentioned a difficulty that would arise in compensating the proprietors of Negroes, admitting this infraction of the Treaty can be satisfied by such compensation as Sir Guy had alluded to, as it was impossible to ascertain the Value of the Slaves from any Fact or Circumstance which may appear in the Register,—the Value of a Slave consisting chiefly in his Industry and Sobriety—& Genl. Washington mentioned a further Difficulty which would attend Identifying the Slave, supposing him to have changed his own and to have given in a wrong Name of his Master.—In answer to which Sir Guy Carleton said, that as the Negroe was free & secured against his Master, he could have no inducement to conceal his own true Name or that of his Master —Sir Guy Carleton then observed that by the Treaty he was not held to deliver up any property but was only restricted from carrying it away—and therefore admitting the interpretation of the Treaty as given by Genl. Washington to be just, he was notwithstanding pursuing a Measure which would operate most for the security of the proprietors. For if the Negroes were left to themselves without Care or Controul from him, numbers of them would very probably go off, and not return to the parts of the Country from whence they came, or clandestinely get on Board the Transports in such a manner as would not be in his Power to prevent —in either of which Cases an inevitable Loss would ensue to the proprietors—But as the Business was now conducted they had at least a Chance for Compensation—Sir Guy concluded the Conversation on this subject by saying that he Imagined that the mode of Compensating as well as the Amount and other points with respect to which there was no provision made in the Treaty, must be adjusted by Commissioners to be hereafter appointed by the two Nations—

The subject of withdrawing the British Troops from the Territories of the United States was again resumed, and Sir Guy Carleton declared his willingness, at a short day to be agreed on between him & Genl. Washington, to evacuate all his Posts in

West Chester County, and to issue his Orders that the British Troops should not on any pretence, pass the river, which separates that County from the Island of N. York—but with respect to a relinquishment of any part of Long Island, he was apprehensive it would be attended with Difficulties & Inconveniences—particularly he was fearfull it would tend to favor Desertions from the British Army, and therefore he would give no determinate answer, but he was disposed immediately to abandon Penobscot if General Washington should choose it, tho' he said that would necessarily retard the Evacuation of N. York, as there were not a competent Number of Transports to convey the Troops & Stores from both places at the same Time.

The Conference lasted some Hours but as much passed which both Generals expressed their wishes might be considered as desultory Conversation, it is not recapitulated in the above Narative which contains only the substance of the Conference as far as it related to the points intended to be discussed & settled at the Interview.

We having been present at the Conference do certify the above to be true.

George Clinton Jno. M. Scott.
Egbert Benson Jona. Trumbull, Jur.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

ORANGETOWN, 6 May, 1783.

SIR,

In my letter of the 21st of April, I enclosed to your Excellency a copy of a resolution of Congress of the 15th, instructing me in three points, which appeared necessary for carrying into effect the terms of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America; and I informed you, that such part as rested upon my decision, and which regarded the release of prisoners, had been determined, and

was then ordered to be carried into execution. Upon the other two points, as they respected the receiving possession of the posts in occupation of the British troops, and the carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, and both being within your control, I had the honor to propose a personal interview with your Excellency, that the subject might be freely discussed, and that measures might be agreed upon, for carrying into execution those points of the seventh article of the treaty, agreeably to their true intent and spirit.

Having been favored this day with a personal conference, I have now, to prevent misapprehension or misconstruction, and that I may be enabled to fulfil my instructions with fidelity and with candor, the honor to propose, agreeably to our conversation, that your Excellency will be pleased to give me in writing information as to what measures are adopting, on your part, for carrying into execution that point of the treaty, which regards the evacuation of the posts now in possession of the British troops and under your Excellency's command; and also at what time it is probable those posts, or any of them, may be relinquished, and the fleets and armies of his Britannic Majesty withdrawn.[1]

[1] "The civil jurisdiction of Westchester County, Sir Guy appeared very willing, in his conversation, to relinquish to the State, but what reply he will make to the Governor, when he comes to reduce it to writing, I don't know. Long Island he seemed to think could not be so easily delivered up. It would be attended with many inconveniences, and mentioned particularly the facility

Respecting the other point of discussion, in addition to what I mentioned in my communication of the 21st ultimo, I took occasion in our conference to inform your Excellency, that, in consequence of your letter of the 14th of April to Robert R. Livingston, Esquire, Congress had been pleased to make a further reference to me of that letter, and had directed me to take such measures as should be found necessary for carrying into effect the several matters mentioned by you therein.[1] In the course of our conversation on this point, I was surprised to hear you mention, that an embarkation had already taken place, in which a large number of negroes had

it would give to desertions, and the necessity of holding it for the accommodation of those people who must eventually be obliged to leave the country. Staten Island was also necessary for his convenience."—*Washington to Robert R. Livingston*, 13 May, 1783.

[1] In the letter here mentioned, Sir Guy Carleton had requested, that Congress would empower some person or persons to go into New York, and assist such persons as he should appoint to inspect and superintend the embarkation of persons and property, in fulfilment of the seventh article of the provisional treaty, and "that they would be pleased to represent to him every infraction of the letter or spirit of the treaty, that redress might be immediately ordered." —*Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xi., p. 335. The commissioners appointed by General Washington for this purpose were Egbert Benson, William S. Smith, and Daniel Parker. Their instructions were dated the 8th of May.

Soon after the commissioners arrived in New York, General Washington sent to Colonel Smith a list of the titles of books, which he had selected from a catalogue published by a bookseller in a gazette, and which he requested Colonel Smith to purchase for him. The reader may be curious to know the kind of works to which his thoughts were at this time directed. They were the following: Life of Charles the Twelfth; Life of Louis the Fifteenth; Life and Reign of Peter the Great; Robertson's History of America; Voltaire's Letters; Vertot's Revolution of Rome, and Revolution of Portugal; Life of Gustavus Adolphus; Sully's Memoirs; Goldsmith's Natural History; Campaigns of Marshal Turenne; Chambaud's French and English Dictionary; Locke on the Human Understanding; Robertson's Charles the Fifth.

been carried away. Whether this conduct is consonant to, or how far it may be deemed an infraction of the treaty, is not for me to decide. I cannot, however, conceal from you, that my private opinion is, that the measure is totally different from the letter and spirit of the treaty. But, waving the discussion of the point, and leaving its decision to our respective sovereigns, I find it my duty to signify my readiness, in conjunction with your Excellency, to enter into any agreement, or to take any measures, which may be deemed expedient, to prevent the future carrying away of any negroes, or other property of the American inhabitants. I beg the favor of your Excellency's reply, and have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

Head-Quarters, 2 June, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 20th of May I received with much pleasure; for I can assure you, that, among the many worthy and meritorious officers, with whom I have had

[1] "The breach of that [article] which stipulated a restoration of negroes, will be made the subject of a pointed remonstrance from our minister in Europe to the British Court, with a demand of reparation; and in the meantime Genl: Washington is to insist on a more faithful observance of that stipulation at New York."—*Virginia Delegates in Congress to the Governor of Virginia*, 27 May, 1783.

note.

"Some of my own slaves, and those of Mr. Lund Washington who lives at my house, may probably be in New York, but I am unable to give you their description—their names being so easily changed, will be fruitless to give you. If by chance you should come at the knowledge of any of them, I will be much obliged by your securing them, so that I may obtain them again."—*Washington to Daniel Parker*, 28 April, 1783.

the happiness to be connected in service through the course of this war, and from whose cheerful assistance and advice I have received much support and confidence, in the various and trying vicissitudes of a complicated contest, the name of a Putnam is not forgotten; nor will it be but with that stroke of time, which shall obliterate from my mind the remembrance of all those toils and fatigues, through which we have struggled for the preservation and establishment of the rights, liberties, and independence of our country.

Your congratulations on the happy prospects of peace and independent security, with their attendant blessings to the United States, I receive with great satisfaction; and beg that you will accept a return of my gratulations to you on this auspicious event; an event, in which, great as it is in itself, and glorious as it will probably be in its consequences, you have a right to participate largely, from the distinguished part you have contributed towards its attainment.

But while I contemplate the greatness of the object for which we have contended, and felicitate you on the happy issue of our toils and labors, which have terminated with such general satisfaction, I lament that you should feel the ungrateful returns of a country, in whose service you have exhausted your bodily health, and expended the vigor of a youthful constitution. I wish, however, that your expectations of returning sentiments of liberality may be verified. I have a hope, they may; but, should they not, your case will not be a singular one. Ingratitude has been experienced in all ages, and republics in particular have

ever been famed for the exercise of that unnatural and sordid vice.

The secretary at war, who is now here, informs me that you have ever been considered as entituled to full pay since your absence from the field; and that you will be still considered in that light till the close of the war, at which period you will be equally entituled to the same emolument of half-pay or commutation as other officers of your rank. The same opinion is also given by the paymaster-general, who is now with the army, empowered by Mr. Morris for the settlement of all their accounts, and who will attend to yours whenever you shall think proper to send on for the purpose; which it will probably be best for you to do in a short time.

I anticipate with pleasure the day, and that I trust not far off, when I shall quit the busy scenes of a military employment, and retire to the more tranquil walks of domestic life. In that, or whatever other situation Providence may dispose my future days, the remembrance of the many friendships and connexions I have had the happiness to contract with the gentlemen of the army will be one of my most grateful reflections. Under this contemplation, and impressed with the sentiments of benevolence and regard, I commend you, my dear Sir, my other friends, and with them the interests and happiness of our dear country, to the keeping and protection of Almighty God.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Putnam had been absent from the army since December, 1779.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
3 June, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 29th ulto has been duly received.

We are now preparing to carry into execution the Resolution of Congress of the 26 of May and I am making out the furloughs accordingly—but I am extremely apprehensive that insuperable difficulties and the worst of consequences may be expected, unless the Notes you mention shall be paid to the Officers and men before their departure from this Cantonment—it is for the sole purpose of bringing them forward to the Pay Mastr. with the greatest expedition, that I send the Messenger who is the bearer of this—pray do not delay him a single instant, but if all the Notes should not be ready forward the remainder by the earliest possible opportunity, & be so good as to inform us when they may be expected—

I write in haste & with earnestness because some circumstances which have just come to my knowledge make it necessary not a moment's time should be lost.[1]

Tho' it is much to be lamented that at least a Month's Pay could not have been given to the Troops in money before they left this place; yet, I am in

[1] "I have at times through the course of this winter had much anxiety from the disposition of the troops in this Department, but happily the prospects of peace have given me much relief, and we shall I hope be able to quit the field without any disgraceful excesses. The principal uneasiness now remaining, arises from an anxiety and impatience of the *men for the war*, who have their minds impressed with an idea that the war is at an end, and that they are entitled to their discharges. If the definitive treaty is not too long delayed, I have a hope that even this circumstance will pass over easier than has been feared."—*Washington to Major General Greene*, 18 May, 1783.

hopes your Notes will in some measure remedy the Evils which might have been expected from their disappointment. Nothing else can now avert the most alarming consequences or distresses of the most cruel nature, particularly to the Officers.

Before I retire from public life, I shall with the greatest freedom give my sentiments to the States on several political subjects, amongst those will be comprehended the particular object you recommend to my attention. With great regard, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 June, 1783.

SIR,

Before I make a reply to the subject of the address[1] of the generals and officers, commanding the regiments and corps of this army, presented by yourself yesterday, I entreat that those gentlemen will accept my warmest acknowledgment for the confidence they have been pleased to repose in me. They may be

[1] The address represented the distresses resulting from the measures incident to the resolution of Congress of May 26th. The two subjects of complaint were the delay in the three months' payment, and the want of a settlement of accounts. To obviate them Washington gave assurances that Congress was attentive to the matter, and he wrote to the President, on the 7th: "While I consider it a tribute of justice on this occasion, to mention the temperate and orderly behavior of the whole army, and particularly the accommodating spirit of the officers in arranging themselves to the command of the battalions, which will be composed of the three years' men, permit me to recall to mind all their former sufferings and merits, and to recommend their reasonable request to the early and favorable notice of Congress." A committee, composed of Hamilton, Bland, and Madison, approved of what Washington had done, and sent his letter to the States, with a recommendation to "facilitate the punctual payment of the notes issued to the army."—*Journals of Congress*, 19 June, 1783.

note

assured it shall never be abused; and I beg they will be persuaded, that, as no man can possibly be better acquainted than I am with the past merits and services of the army, so no one can possibly be more strongly impressed with their present ineligible situation, feel a keener sensibility at their distresses, or more ardently desire to alleviate or remove them. But it would be unnecessary, perhaps, to enter into a detail of what I have done, and what I am still attempting to do, in order to assist in the accomplishment of this interesting purpose. Let it be sufficient to observe, I do not yet despair of success; for I am perfectly convinced that the States cannot, without involving themselves in national bankruptcy and ruin, refuse to comply with the requisitions of Congress; who, it must be acknowledged, have done every thing in their power to obtain ample and complete justice for the army; and whose great object in the present measure undoubtedly was, by a reduction of expense, to enable the financier to make the three months' payment to the army, which on all hands has been agreed to be absolutely and indispensably necessary. To explain this matter, I beg leave to insert an extract of a letter from the superintendent of finance, dated the 29th ultimo.

"It is now above a month since the committee conferred with me on that subject, and I then told them no payment could be made to the army, but by means of a paper anticipation; and, unless our expenditures were immediately and considerably reduced, even that could not be done. Our expenditures have nevertheless been continued, and our revenues lessen, the States growing daily more and more remiss in their collections. The

consequence is, that I cannot make payment in the manner first intended. The notes issued for this purpose would have been payable at two, four, and six months from the date, but at present they will be at six months, and even that will soon become impracticable, unless our expenses be immediately curtailed.

"I shall cause such notes to be issued for three months' pay to the army; and I must entreat, Sir, that every influence be used with the States to absorb them, together with my other engagements, by taxation."

Three days ago, a messenger was despatched by me to urge the necessity of forwarding these notes with the greatest possible expedition. Under this state of circumstances, I need scarcely add, that the expense of every day, in feeding the whole army, will increase very considerably the inability of the public to discharge the debts already incurred, at least for a considerable time to come. Although the officers of the army very well know my official situation, that I am only a servant of the public, and that it is not for me to dispense with orders, which it is my duty to carry into execution; yet, as furloughs in all services are considered as a matter of indulgence, and not of compulsion; as Congress, I am persuaded, entertain the best disposition towards the army; and as I apprehend in a very short time the two principal articles of complaint will be removed, until the further pleasure of Congress can be known, I shall not hesitate to comply with the wishes of the army, under these reservations only, that officers sufficient to conduct the men, who choose to receive furloughs, will attend them, either on furlough or by detachment. The propriety and necessity of this measure must be obvious to all;

it need not, therefore, be enforced; and, with regard to the non-commissioned officers and privates, such, as from a peculiarity of circumstances wish not to receive furloughs at this time, will give in their names by twelve o'clock to-morrow to the commanding officers of their regiments, that, on a report to the adjutant-general, an equal number of men, engaged for three years, may be furloughed, which will make the saving of expenses exactly the same to the public.

I cannot but hope the notes will soon arrive, and that the settlement of accounts may be completed, by the assistance of the paymasters, in a very few days. In the mean time, I shall have the honor of laying the sentiments of the generals and officers, commanding regiments and corps, before Congress; they are expressed in such a decent, candid, and affecting manner, that I am certain every mark of attention will be paid to them. I have the honor to be, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE GOVERNORS OF ALL THE STATES ON DISBANDING THE ARMY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
8 June, 1783.

SIR,

The great object, for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the service of my country, being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and to return to that domestic retirement, which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh, through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life, in a state of undisturbed repose. But

before I carry this resolution into effect, I think it a duty incumbent on me to make this my last official communication; to congratulate you on the glorious events which Heaven has been pleased to produce in our favor; to offer my sentiments respecting some important subjects, which appear to me to be intimately connected with the tranquillity of the United States; to take my leave of your Excellency as a public character; and to give my final blessing to that country, in whose service I have spent the prime of my life, for whose sake I have consumed so many anxious days and watchful nights, and whose happiness, being extremely dear to me, will always constitute no inconsiderable part of my own.

Impressed with the liveliest sensibility on this pleasing occasion, I will claim the indulgence of dilating the more copiously on the subjects of our mutual felicitation. When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favorable manner in which it has terminated, we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing. This is a theme that will afford infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind, whether the event in contemplation be considered as the source of present enjoyment, or the parent of future happiness; and we shall have equal occasion to felicitate ourselves on the lot which Providence has assigned us, whether we view it in a natural, a political, or moral point of light.

The citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life, are now, by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and independency. They are, from this period, to be considered as the actors on a most conspicuous theatre, which seems to be peculiarly designated by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity. Here they are not only surrounded with every thing, which can contribute to the completion of private and domestic enjoyment; but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by giving a fairer opportunity for political happiness, than any other nation has ever

been favored with. Nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly, than a recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our republic assumed its rank among the nations. The foundation of our empire was not laid in the gloomy age of ignorance and superstition; but at an epocha when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined, than at any former period. The researches of the human mind after social happiness have been carried to a great extent; the treasures of knowledge, acquired by the labors of philosophers, sages, and legislators, through a long succession of years, are laid open for our use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the establishment of our forms of government. The free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and, above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind and increased the blessings of society. At this auspicious period, the United States came into existence as a nation; and, if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.

Such is our situation, and such are our prospects; but notwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus reached out to us; notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion and make it our own; yet it appears to me there is an option still left to the United States of America, that it is in their choice, and depends upon their conduct, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable, as a nation. This is the time of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character for ever; this is the favorable moment to give such a tone to our federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution, or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For,

according to the system of policy the States shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall; and by their confirmation or lapse it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse; a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.

With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak to your Excellency the language of freedom and of sincerity without disguise. I am aware, however, that those who differ from me in political sentiment, may perhaps remark, I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is alone the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed, of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ardent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government, will, I flatter myself, sooner or latter convince my countrymen, that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address.

There are four things, which, I humbly conceive, are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head.

Secondly. A sacred regard to public justice.

Thirdly. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; and,

Fourthly. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies; to make those mutual concessions, which are requisite to the general prosperity; and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the

basis ; and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration, and the severest punishment, which can be inflicted by his injured country.

On the three first articles I will make a few observations, leaving the last to the good sense and serious consideration of those immediately concerned.

Under the first head, although it may not be necessary or proper for me, in this place, to enter into a particular disquisition on the principles of the Union, and to take up the great question which has been frequently agitated, whether it be expedient and requisite for the States to delegate a larger proportion of power to Congress, or not ; yet it will be a part of my duty, and that of every true patriot, to assert without reserve, and to insist upon, the following positions. That, unless the States will suffer Congress to exercise those prerogatives they are undoubtedly invested with by the constitution, every thing must very rapidly tend to anarchy and confusion. That it is indispensable to the happiness of the individual States, that there should be lodged somewhere a supreme power to regulate and govern the general concerns of the confederated republic, without which the Union cannot be of long duration. That there must be a faithful and pointed compliance, on the part of every State, with the late proposals and demands of Congress, or the most fatal consequences will ensue. That whatever measures have a tendency to dissolve the Union, or contribute to violate or lessen the sovereign authority, ought to be considered as hostile to the liberty and independency of America, and the authors of them treated accordingly. And lastly, that unless we can be enabled, by the concurrence of the States, to participate of the fruits of the revolution, and enjoy the essential benefits of civil society, under a form of government so free and uncorrupted, so happily guarded against the danger of oppression, as has been devised and adopted by the articles of confederation, it will be a subject of regret, that so much blood and treasure have been lavished for no purpose, that so many sufferings have been encountered without a compensation, and that so many sacrifices have been made in vain.

Many other considerations might here be adduced to prove, that, without an entire conformity to the spirit of the Union, we cannot exist as an independent power. It will be sufficient for my purpose to mention but one or two, which seem to me of the greatest importance. It is only in our united character, as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our credit supported, among foreign nations. The treaties of the European powers with the United States of America will have no validity on a dissolution of the Union. We shall be left nearly in a state of nature; or we may find, by our own unhappy experience, that there is a natural and necessary progression from the extreme of anarchy to the extreme of tyranny, and that arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of liberty, abused to licentiousness.

As to the second article, which respects the performance of public justice, Congress have, in their late address to the United States, almost exhausted the subject; they have explained their ideas so fully, and have enforced the obligations the States are under, to render complete justice to all the public creditors, with so much dignity and energy, that, in my opinion, no real friend to the honor of independency of America can hesitate a single moment, respecting the propriety of complying with the just and honorable measures proposed. If their arguments do not produce conviction, I know of nothing that will have greater influence: especially when we recollect, that the system referred to, being the result of the collected wisdom of the continent, must be esteemed, if not perfect, certainly the least objectionable of any that could be devised; and that, if it shall not be carried into immediate execution, a national bankruptcy, with all its deplorable consequences, will take place, before any different plan can possibly be proposed and adopted. So pressing are the present circumstances, and such is the alternative now offered to the States.

The ability of the country to discharge the debts, which have been incurred in its defence, is not to be doubted; an inclination, I flatter myself, will not be wanting. The path of our duty is plain before us; honesty will be found, on every experiment, to

be the best and only true policy. Let us then, as a nation, be just; let us fulfil the public contracts, which Congress had undoubtedly a right to make for the purpose of carrying on the war, with the same good faith we suppose ourselves bound to perform our private engagements. In the mean time, let an attention to the cheerful performance of their proper business, as individuals and as members of society, be earnestly inculcated on the citizens of America; then will they strengthen the hands of government, and be happy under its protection; every one will reap the fruit of his labors, every one will enjoy his own acquisitions, without molestation and without danger.

In this state of absolute freedom and perfect security, who will grudge to yield a very little of his property to support the common interest of society, and insure the protection of government? Who does not remember the frequent declarations, at the commencement of the war, that we should be completely satisfied, if, at the expense of one half, we could defend the remainder of our possessions? Where is the man to be found, who wishes to remain indebted for the defence of his own person and property to the exertions, the bravery, and the blood of others, without making one generous effort to repay the debt of honor and gratitude? In what part of the continent shall we find any man, or body of men, who would not blush to stand up and propose measures purposely calculated to rob the soldier of his stipend, and the public creditor of his due? And were it possible, that such a flagrant instance of injustice could ever happen, would it not excite the general indignation, and tend to bring down upon the authors of such measures the aggravated vengeance of Heaven? If, after all, a spirit of disunion, or a temper of obstinacy and perverseness should manifest itself in any of the States; if such an ungracious disposition should attempt to frustrate all the happy effects that might be expected to flow from the Union; if there should be a refusal to comply with the requisition for funds to discharge the annual interest of the public debts; and if that refusal should revive again all those jealousies, and produce all those evils, which are now happily removed, Congress, who have, in all their transactions, shown a great degree of magnanimity and justice,

will stand justified in the sight of God and man; and the State alone, which puts itself in opposition to the aggregate wisdom of the continent, and follows such mistaken and pernicious counsels, will be responsible for all the consequences.[1]

For my own part, conscious of having acted, while a servant of the public, in the manner I conceived best suited to promote the real interests of my country; having, in consequence of my fixed belief, in some measure pledged myself to the army, that their country would finally do them complete and ample justice; and not wishing to conceal any instance of my official conduct from the eyes of the world, I have thought proper to transmit to your Excellency the enclosed collection of papers, relative to the half-pay and commutation granted by Congress to the officers of the army. From these communications, my decided sentiments will be clearly comprehended, together with the conclusive reasons which induced me, at an early period, to recommend the adoption of this measure, in the most earnest and serious manner. As the proceedings of Congress, the army, and myself, are open to all, and contain, in my opinion, sufficient information to remove the prejudices and errors, which may have been entertained by any, I think it unnecessary to say any thing more than just to observe, that the resolutions of Congress, now alluded to, are undoubtedly as absolutely binding upon the United States, as the most solemn acts of confederation or legislation.

As to the idea, which, I am informed, has in some instances prevailed, that the half-pay and commutation are to be regarded merely in the odious light of a pension, it ought to be exploded for ever. That provision should be viewed, as it really was, a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give to the officers of the army for services then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire. I

[1] "The arrival of Gen. Washington's circular letter excited this hope [of a passage of the impost law] in the minds of the sanguine; but its effect is momentary; and perhaps it will hereafter be accepted by the assembly with disgust. For the murmur is free and general against what is called the unsolicited obtrusion of his advice."—*Randolph to Madison*, 28 June, 1783.

may be allowed to say, it was the price of their blood, and of your independency; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honor; it can never be considered as a pension or gratuity, nor be cancelled until it is fairly discharged.

With regard to a distinction between officers and soldiers, it is sufficient that the uniform experience of every nation of the world, combined with our own, proves the utility and propriety of the discrimination. Rewards, in proportion to the aids the public derives from them, are unquestionably due to all its servants. In some lines, the soldiers have perhaps generally had as ample a compensation for their services, by the large bounties which have been paid to them, as their officers will receive in the proposed commutation; in others, if, besides the donation of lands, the payment of arrearages of clothing and wages (in which articles all the component parts of the army must be put upon the same footing), we take into the estimate the douceurs many of the soldiers have received, and the gratuity of one year's full pay, which is promised to all, possibly their situation (every circumstance being duly considered) will not be deemed less eligible than that of the officers. Should a further reward, however, be judged equitable, I will venture to assert, no one will enjoy greater satisfaction than myself, on seeing an exemption from taxes for a limited time, (which has been petitioned for in some instances,) or any other adequate immunity or compensation granted to the brave defenders of their country's cause; but neither the adoption or rejection of this proposition will in any manner affect, much less militate against, the act of Congress, by which they have offered five years' full pay, in lieu of the half-pay for life, which had been before promised to the officers of the army.

Before I conclude the subject of public justice, I cannot omit to mention the obligations this country is under to that meritorious class of veteran non-commissioned officers and privates, who have been discharged for inability, in consequence of the resolution of Congress of the 23d of April, 1782, on an annual pension for life. Their peculiar sufferings, their singular merits, and claims to that provision, need only be known, to interest all the feelings of humanity in their behalf. Nothing but a punctual

payment of their annual allowance can rescue them from the most complicated misery; and nothing could be a more melancholy and distressing sight, than to behold those, who have shed their blood or lost their limbs in the service of their country, without a shelter, without a friend, and without the means of obtaining any of the necessaries or comforts of life, compelled to beg their daily bread from door to door. Suffer me to recommend those of this description, belonging to your State, to the warmest patronage of your Excellency and your legislature.

It is necessary to say but a few words on the third topic which was proposed, and which regards particularly the defence of the republic; as there can be little doubt but Congress will recommend a proper peace establishment for the United States, in which a due attention will be paid to the importance of placing the militia of the Union upon a regular and respectable footing. If this should be the case, I would beg leave to urge the great advantage of it in the strongest terms. The militia of this country must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility. It is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements, and military apparatus, should be introduced in every part of the United States. No one, who has not learned it from experience, can conceive the difficulty, expense, and confusion, which result from a contrary system, or the vague arrangements which have hitherto prevailed.

If, in treating of political points, a greater latitude than usual has been taken in the course of this address, the importance of the crisis, and the magnitude of the objects in discussion, must be my apology. It is, however, neither my wish or expectation, that the preceding observations should claim any regard, except so far as they shall appear to be dictated by a good intention, consonant to the immutable rules of justice, calculated to produce a liberal system of policy, and founded on whatever experience may have been acquired by a long and close attention to public business. Here I might speak with the more confidence, from my actual

observations; and, if it would not swell this letter (already too prolix) beyond the bounds I had prescribed to myself, I could demonstrate to every mind open to conviction, that in less time, and with much less expense, than has been incurred, the war might have been brought to the same happy conclusion, if the resources of the continent could have been properly drawn forth; that the distresses and disappointments, which have very often occurred, have, in too many instances, resulted more from a want of energy in the Continental government, than a deficiency of means in the particular States; that the inefficacy of measures arising from the want of an adequate authority in the supreme power, from a partial compliance with the requisitions of Congress in some of the States, and from a failure of punctuality in others, while it tended to damp the zeal of those, which were more willing to exert themselves, served also to accumulate the expenses of the war, and to frustrate the best concerted plans; and that the discouragement occasioned by the complicated difficulties and embarrassments, in which our affairs were by this means involved, would have long ago produced the dissolution of any army, less patient, less virtuous, and less persevering, than that which I have had the honor to command. But, while I mention these things, which are notorious facts, as the defects of our federal constitution, particularly in the prosecution of a war, I beg it may be understood, that, as I have ever taken a pleasure in gratefully acknowledging the assistance and support I have derived from every class of citizens, so shall I always be happy to do justice to the unparalleled exertions of the individual States on many interesting occasions.

I have thus freely disclosed what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency as the chief magistrate of your State, at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office, and all the employments of public life.

It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature at their next meeting, and that they may be considered as the

legacy of one, who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the Divine benediction upon it.

I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.

I have the honor to be, with much esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant.[1]

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

[EXTRACT.]

11 June, 1783.

I do not blame you for the wages which you gave Evans; I have no doubt of your having engaged him upon as good terms as you could, and as it was my wish to have the work forwarded, this was all I had a right to expect.

In one of your letters (speaking of the difficulty of getting workmen) you recommend it to me to engage some of the enemy who were prisoners with us—

[1] The legislatures that were sitting when this letter was received, passed resolves highly honorary to the Commander-in-chief; and the governors of the States wrote letters to him expressing thanks and gratitude for his long, devoted, and successful services in the cause of his country.

many of whom, you say, are good workmen. Why, let me ask, when they hired themselves by the authority of Congress, and comparatively speaking were in your neighborhood, would you not do this for me? None of them were within 300 miles of me, and most of them within 55 to 80 miles of you. But you seem to have had an unconquerable aversion to going from home; one consequence of which is, I expect I shall lose all my rents; for in a letter I have lately received from my brother John, in Berkeley, are these words: "I fear you are suffering *greatly* in your rents, as I am informed many of the tenants are going into the Western country, and understand there are many years' arrears of rent due to you." In divers letters, at divers times in the course of the three or four last years, have I mentioned this fact to you, and the necessity of visiting them; but cannot find by any of your letters, that you have ever been amongst them more than once, and then I believe only partially. I expect also that all the money I have expended on the mill at Yohoghaney, and all the property which has been put into the hands of Gilbert Simpson, will be sunk for want of *proper* endeavors to bring him to account. But if your own wages, since the charge of them in the account rendered at Valley Forge, has not been received by you in the specific articles of the crop, which does not appear by the accounts you have lately rendered to me, I shall be more hurt than at any thing else, to think that an estate, which I have drawn nothing from for eight years, and which always enabled me to make any purchase I had in view,

should not have been able for the last five years, to pay the manager: and that, worse than going home to enjoy coffers, and expensive living, I shall be encumbered with debt. It is disagreeable to me, because I dare say it will be so to you, to make these observations; but as my public business is now drawing to a close, I cannot avoid looking towards my private concerns, which do not wear the most smiling countenance.

I am sorry that Barry's land has at last slipped through my fingers. If the purchaser made it with a view to *rent* it to me, he shall be disappointed; nor shall any *tenant*, or *himself*, if he proposes to live on it, reap the *smallest* benefit from my fencing and other improvements, without which the place is of no value to any but me. This the purchaser must have known, and as his aim must have been to take advantage of my wishes to add this small piece of land (surrounded as it is) to my tract, let him abide the consequence of his interference, especially as it was well known, I wanted to take no advantage of Barry, having offered to leave the price to three *disinterested* men, of his own choosing, to fix.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
17 June, 1783.

SIR:

I have the honor of transmitting to your Excellency for the consideration of Congress, a Petition from a large number of Officers of the Army in behalf of themselves, and such other Officers and Soldiers

of the Continental Army as are entitled to rewards in lands, and may choose to avail themselves of any Priviledges and Grants which shall be obtained in consequence of the present solicitation—I enclose also the Copy of a Letter from Brigr. General Putnam in which the sentiments and expectations of the Petitioners are more fully explained; and in which the ideas of occupying the Posts in the Western Country will be found to correspond very nearly with those I have some time since communicated to a Committee of Congress, in treating of the subject of a Peace Establishment.—I will beg leave to make a few more observations on the general benefits of the Location and Settlement now proposed; and then submit the justice & policy of the measure to the wisdom of Congress.

Altho' I pretend not myself to determine how far the district of unsettled Country which is described in the Petition is free from the claim of every State, or how far this disposal of it may interfere with the views of Congress, yet it appears to me this is the Tract which from its local position and peculiar advantages ought to be first settled in preference to any other whatever, and I am perfectly convinced that it cannot be so advantageously settled by any other class of men as by the disbanded Officers and Soldiers of the Army—to whom the faith of Government hath long since been pledged, that lands should be granted at the expiration of the War, in certain proportions agreeably to their respective grades.

I am induced to give my sentiments thus freely on the advantages to be expected from this plan of Colo-

nization—because it would connect our Governments with the frontiers, extend our settlements progressively—and plant a brave, a hardy, & respectable Race of People as our advanced ———, who would be always ready & willing (in case of hostility) to combat the Savages, and check their incursions—A Settlement formed of such Men would give security to our frontiers—the very name of it would awe the Indians—and more than probably prevent the murder of many innocent Families, which frequently in the usual mode of extending our Settlements & Encroachments on the hunting grounds of the Natives, fall the hapless Victims to savage barbarity—Besides the emoluments which might be derived from the Peltry Trade at our Factories, if such should be established; the appearance of so formidable a Settlement in the vicinity of their towns (to say nothing of the barrier it would form against our other Neighbors) would be the most likely means to enable us to purchase upon equitable terms of the Aborigines their right of preoccupancy; and to induce them to relinquish our Territories, and to remove into the illimitable regions of the West.

Much more might be said of the public utility of such a Location, as well as of the private felicity it would afford to the Individuals concerned in it—I will venture to say—it is the most rational & practicable Scheme which can be adopted by a great proportion of the Officers & Soldiers of our Army, and promises them more happiness than they can expect in any other way.

The Settlers being in the prime of life, inured to hardship & taught by experience to accommodate themselves in every situation—going in a considerable body, and under the patronage of Government, would enjoy in the first instance *advantages* in procuring subsistence and all the necessaries for a comfortable beginning, superior to any common class of Emigrants & quite unknown to those who have heretofore extended themselves beyond the Apalachian Mountains. They may expect after a little perseverance, *Competence & Independence* for themselves, a pleasant retreat in old age—and the fairest prospects for their children. I have &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
Evening, 24 June, 1783.

SIR,

It was not until three o'clock this afternoon, that I had the first intimation of the infamous and outrageous mutiny of a part of the Pennsylvania troops. It was then I received your Excellency's Letter of the 21st by express, and, agreeable to your request contained in it, I instantly ordered three complete regiments of infantry and a detachment of artillery to be put in motion as soon as possible. This corps, (which, you will observe by the return, is a large proportion of our whole force,) will consist of upwards of fifteen hundred effectives. As all the troops, who composed this gallant little army, as well those who are furloughed, as those who remain in service, are men of tried fidelity, I could

not have occasion to make any choice of corps; and I have only to regret, that there existed a necessity, they should be employed on so disagreeable a service. I dare say, however, they will on this and all other occasions perform their duty, as brave and faithful soldiers.[1]

While I suffer the most poignant distress, in observing that a handful of men, contemptible in numbers, and equally so in point of service (if the veteran troops from the southward have not been seduced by their example), and who are not worthy to be called soldiers, should disgrace themselves as the Pennsylvania mutineers have done, by insulting the sovereign authority of the United States and that of their own, I feel an inexpressible satisfaction, that even this behavior cannot stain the name of the American soldiery. It cannot be imputable to, or reflect dishonor on, the army at large; but on the contrary, it will, by the striking contrast it exhibits, hold up to public view the other troops in the most advantageous point of light. Upon taking all the circumstances into consideration, I cannot sufficiently express my surprise and indignation at the arrogance, the folly, and the wickedness of the mutineers; nor can I sufficiently admire the fidelity, the bravery, and the patriotism, which must for ever signalize the unsullied character of the

mutiny

[1] In his instructions Major-General Howe was told the object of his command was "to suppress a mutiny, which has taken place amongst a part of the Pennsylvania troops; in the accomplishment of which you will be governed by your own discretion, until you can receive the orders of Congress. Should the tumult have subsided, you will meet directions from his Excellency, the President, countermanding your march. You will then return by easy movements." —25 June, 1783.

other corps of our army. For, when we consider, that these Pennsylvania levies, who have now mutinied, are recruits and soldiers of a day, who have not borne the heat and burden of the war, and who can have in reality very few hardships to complain of; and when we at the same time recollect, that those soldiers, who have lately been furloughed from this army, are the veterans who have patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold, who have suffered and bled without a murmur, and who, with perfect good order, have retired to their homes without a settlement of their accounts, or a farthing of money in their pockets; we shall be as much astonished at the virtues of the latter, as we are struck with horror and detestation at the proceedings of the former; and every candid mind, without indulging ill-grounded prejudices, will undoubtedly make the proper discrimination.

I intended only to wait until the troops were collected, and had occupied their new camp, in order to make a full report to Congress of the measures, which have been taken in consequence of the resolution of the 26th of May. Notwithstanding the option, which was given in my answer to the address of the generals and officers commanding regiments and corps, which has already been sent to your Excellency, no soldiers, except a very few, whose homes are within the enemy's lines, and a very small number of officers, have thought proper to avail themselves of it, by remaining with the army. A list of those who remain is herewith transmitted. The men engaged to serve three years were then formed into regiments and corps in

the following manner; namely, the troops of Massachusetts composed four regiments; Connecticut, one regiment; New Hampshire, five companies; Rhode Island, two companies; Massachusetts artillery, three companies; and New York artillery, two companies. The total strength will be seen by the weekly state, which is also forwarded.

The army being thus reduced to merely a competent garrison for West Point, that being the only object of importance in this quarter, and it being necessary to employ a considerable part of the men in building an arsenal and magazines at that post, agreeably to the directions given by the secretary at war, the troops accordingly broke up the cantonment yesterday, and removed to that garrison, where Major-General Knox still retains the command. The detachment, which marches for Philadelphia, will be under the orders of Major-General Howe, Major-General Heath having, at his own particular request, retired from the field. The brigadiers now remaining with the army are Patterson, Huntington, and Greaton, besides the adjutant-general. Thus have I given the present state of our military affairs, and I hope the arrangements will be satisfactory to Congress. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Should any thing turn up, which may prevent the necessity of the troops proceeding to Philadelphia, I am to request your Excellency will send the earliest intimation to the commanding officer, that the detachment may return immediately. The route

will be by Ringwood, Pompton, Morristown, Princeton, and Trenton, on which your express may meet the corps.[1]

TO DR. WILLIAM GORDON.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
8 July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 19th of June came to my hand on Sunday last by the Southern Mail. From this circumstance and the date of it, I conclude it has been to Philadelphia—A mistake not very unusual for the Postmaster at Fishkil to commit.

I delayed not a moment to forward the letters which came to me under your cover of the 26th of Feby. to New York. I did not answer the letter which accompanied them in due Season—not so much from the hurry of business, as because my Sentiments on the essential part of it, had been communicated to you before; and because the Annunciation of Peace, which came close upon the heels of it, put an end to all speculative opinions with respect to the time and terms of it.

I now thank you for your kind congratulations on this event. I feel sensibly the flattering expressions, and fervent wishes with which you have accompanied

[1] In consequence of the mutinous temper and menacing conduct of armed soldiers in Philadelphia, Congress resolved, "that the secretary at war be directed to communicate to the Commander-in-chief the state and disposition of the said troops, in order that he may take measures to despatch to this city such force as he may judge expedient for suppressing any disturbances that may ensue."—*Journals*, June 21st. Congress adjourned the same day, and reassembled at Princeton, in New Jersey, on the 30th. The causes of this change of residence, and the particulars concerning the mutiny, are explained in a report of a committee entered in the *Journals of Congress*. *Hamilton's Works*, viii., 124, and *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, xiii., 654.

them and make a tender of mine, with much cordiality, in return.—It now rests with the Confederated Powers, by the line of conduct they mean to adopt, to make this Country great, happy, and respectable ; or to sink it into littleness—worse perhaps—into Anarchy and confusion ; for certain I am, that unless adequate Powers are given to Congress for the *general* purposes of the Federal Union, that we shall soon moulder into dust and become contemptible in the eyes of Europe, if we are not made the sport of their Politicks. To suppose that the general concerns of this Country can be directed by thirteen heads, or one head without competent powers, is a solecism, the bad effects of which every man who has had the practical knowledge to judge from, that I have, is fully convinced of ; tho' none perhaps has felt them in so forcible and distressing a degree. The People at large, and at a distance from the theatre of action, who only know that the machine was kept in motion, and that they are at last arrived at the first object of their wishes, are satisfied with the event, without investigating the causes of the slow progress to it, or of the expences which have accrued, and which they have been unwilling to pay—great part of which has arisen from that want of energy in the Federal Constitution, which I am complaining of, and which I wish to see given to it by a Convention of the People, instead of hearing it remarked that, as we have worked through an arduous contest with the powers Congress already have (but which, by the by, have been gradually diminishing,) why should they be invested with more ?

To say nothing of the invisible workings of Providence, which has conducted us through difficulties where no human foresight could point the way; it will appear evident to a close examiner, that there has been a concatenation of causes to produce this event; which in all probability, at no time, or under any other circumstances, will combine again—We deceive ourselves therefore by the mode of reasoning, and, what would be much worse, we may bring ruin upon ourselves by attempting to carry it into practice.

We are known by no other character among nations than as the United States—Massachusetts or Virginia is no better defined, nor any more thought of by Foreign Powers than the County of Worcester in Massachusetts is by Virginia, or Gloucester County in Virginia is by Massachusetts, (respectable as they are); and yet these counties with as much propriety might oppose themselves to the Laws of the State in which they are, as an Individual State can oppose itself to the Federal Government, by which it is, or ought to be bound. Each of these counties has, no doubt, its local polity and Interests. These should be attended to, and brought before their respective legislatures with all the force their importance merits; but when they come in contact with the general Interest of the State, when superior considerations preponderate in favor of the whole, their voices should be heard no more. So should it be with individual States when compared to the Union, otherwise I think it may properly be asked for what purpose do we farcically pretend to be United? Why do Congress spend

months together in deliberating upon, debating, and digesting plans, which are made as palatable, and as wholesome to the Constitution of this country as the nature of things will admit of, when some States will pay no attention to them, and others regard them but partially; by which means all those evils which proceed from delay, are felt by the whole; while the compliant States are not only suffering by these neglects, but in many instances are injured most capitally by their own exertions; which are wasted for want of the united effort. A hundred thousand men, coming one after another, cannot move a Ton weight; but the united strength of 50 would transport it with ease. So has it been with great part of the expence which has been incurred this War. In a word, I think the blood and treasure, which has been spent in it, has been lavished to little purpose, unless we can be better cemented; and that is not to be effected while so little attention is paid to the recommendations of the Sovereign Power.

To me it would seem not more absurd, to hear a traveller, who was setting out on a long journey, declare he would take no money in his pocket to defray the Expences of it, but rather depend upon Chance and Charity, lest he should misapply it—than are the expressions of so much fear of the powers and means of Congress.

For Heaven's sake, who are Congress? are they not the creatures of the People, amenable to them for their conduct, and dependent from day to day on their breath? Where then can be the danger of

giving them such Powers as are adequate to the great ends of Government, and to all the general purposes of the Confederation (I repeat the word *general*, because I am no advocate for their having to do with the particular policy of any state, further than it concerns the Union at large)? What may be the consequences if they have not these Powers, I am at no loss to guess; and deprecate the worst; for sure I am, we shall, in a little time become as contemptible in the great scale of Politicks, as we now have it in our power to be respectable. And that, when the band of Union gets once broken, every thing ruinous to our future prospects is to be apprehended. The best that can come of it, in my humble opinion is, that we shall sink into obscurity, unless our Civil broils should keep us in remembrance and fill the page of history with the direful consequences of them.

You say that, Congress loose time by pressing a mode that does not accord with the genius of the People, and will thereby, endanger the Union, and that it is the quantum they want. Permit me to ask if the quantum has not already been demanded? Whether it has been obtained? and whence proceeds the accumulated evils, and poignant distresses of many of the public Creditors—particularly in the Army? For my own part I hesitate not a moment to confess, that I see nothing wherein the Union is endangered by the late requisition of that body, but a prospect of much good, justice, and prosperity from the compliance with it. I know of no tax more convenient, none so agreeable, as that which every man may pay,—or let it alone, as his

convenience, abilities, or Inclination shall prompt. I am therefore a warm friend to the impost.

I can only repeat to you, that whenever Congress shall think proper to open the door of their Archives to you (which can be best known, and with more propriety discovered through the Delegates of your own State), all my Records and Papers shall be unfolded to your View, and I shall be happy in your Company at Mt. Vernon while you are taking such Extracts from them, as you may find convenient. It is a piece of respect which I think is due to the Sovereign Power to let it take the lead in this business (without any interference of mine); and another reason why I choose to withhold mine to this epoch is, that I am positive no history of the Revolution can be perfect if the Historiographer has not free access to that fund of Information. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to Mrs. Gordon—and I am &c.

TO M. MARBOIS.

H. Q., NEWBURGH, 9 July, 1787.

SIR,

The last Post brought me the honor of your favor of the first Instt. inclosing an Extract from the Letter of Monsr. de Malesherbes to you.

I hardly know how, sufficiently to express my gratitude and thanks to that Gentleman for his intended favors, and the polite and flattering manner in which he seems disposed to confer them. Nor can I sufficiently express my concern for the trouble he has had from my improper explanation to the misconception

of, my good and amiable friend the Marqs. de la Fayette.

To cultivate Exotics for the purpose of making Wine, or for my amusement, was never contemplated by me. The spontaneous growth of the Vine in all parts of this country, the different qualities of them and periods for maturation, led me to conclude, that by a happy choice of the species I might succeed better than those who had attempted the foreign vine. Accordingly, a year or two before hostilities commenced, I selected about two thousand cuttings of a kind which does not ripen with us (in Virginia) till repeated frosts in the Autumn meliorate the Grape and deprive the Vines of their leaves. It is then, and not before, the grape (which is never very pallitable) can be Eaten.

Several little Essays have been made by Gentlemen of my acquaintance to cultivate the foreign grape, for Wine; but none had well succeeded; owing either to an improper kind, or the want of skill in the management. For the most part, their Wine soon contracted an acidity, which rendered it unfit for use; one cause of which I ascribed to the ripening of their grape in our Summer or Autumnal heats, and to the too great fermentation occasioned thereby. This consideration led me to try the wild grape of the Country, and to fix upon the species which I have already described, and which in the Eight years I have been absent from my Estate has been little attended to. Had I remained at home, I should ere this, have perfected the experiment which was all I had in view.

Thus, my good Sir, have I given you the history of my proposed cultivation of the Vine—and all I ever

had in contemplation to attempt. I feel unhappy therefore at being the innocent cause of so much trouble to Monsr. de Malesherbes whose politeness, and goodness upon this occasion seems to have no bounds and fills me with gratitude and acknowledgement which I beg the favor of you to convey to him in such terms as I know you are master of, and which will do more justice to my feelings than any expressions of my own.

If, notwithstanding my former plans, Monsr. de Malesherbes will honor me with a few sets, or cuttings of any *one* kind (and the choice is left altogether to himself,) I will cultivate them with the utmost care. I will always think of him when I go into my little Vineyard, and the first fruits of it shall be dedicated to him as the Author of it.

If to these he would add a few sets of the several kinds of Eating Grape for my Gardens, it would add much to the obligation he seems so well disposed to confer on me.

For the trouble you have had, and I am about to give you in this business, you will please to accept my thanks, and the assurances of that esteem and regard with which I have &c.

TO GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
10 July, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

With very sincere pleasure I receiv'd your favor of the 26th March. It came to hand a few days ago, and gave me the satisfaction of learning that you en-

joyed good health, and yt. Mrs. Fairfax had improved in hers. There was nothing wanting in this Letter to give compleat satisfaction to Mrs. Washington and myself, but some expression to induce us to believe you would once more become our neighbors. Your house at Belvoir I am sorry to add is no more, but mine (which is enlarged since you saw it,) is most sincerely and heartily at your service till you could rebuild it.

As the path, after being closed by a long, arduous, and painful contest, is to use an Indian metaphor, now opened and made smooth, I shall please myself with the hope of hearing from you frequently ; and till you forbid me to endulge the wish, I shall not despair of seeing you and Mrs. Fairfax once more the inhabitants of Belvoir, and greeting you both there the intimate companions of our old age, as you have been of our younger years. I cannot sufficiently express my sensibility for your kind congratulations on the favorable termination of the War, and for the flattering manner in which you are pleased to speak of my instrumentality in effecting a revolution, which I can truly aver, was not in the beginning premeditated ; but the result of dire necessity brought about by the persecuting spirit of the British Government. This no man can speak to with more certainty, or assert upon better grounds than myself—as I was a member of Congress in the Councils of America till the affair at Bunker Hill, and was an attentive observer and witness to those interesting and painful struggles for accomodation, and redress of grievances in a Con-

stitutional way, which all the world saw and must have approved, except the ignorant, deluded and designing.

I unite my prayers most fervently with yours for wisdom to these U. States, and have no doubt, after a little while all errors in the present form of their Government will be corrected, and a happy temper be diffused through the whole; but, like young heirs come a little prematurely perhaps to a large inheritance, it is more than probable they will riot for a while—but this, if it should happen, tho' it is a circumstance which is to be lamented (as I would have the national character of America be pure and immaculate,) will work its own cure, as there is virtue at the bottom.

You speak of having written many Letters to me during the War; but few, very few indeed have ever reached me. Early, and repeatedly, did I advise you of the impracticability, while I continued to direct the military operations of the Country, of my paying the smallest attention to your Interest in Virginia, and pressed you to name some other friend to superintend your business. Upon your suggestion of Mr. Nicholas, I wrote to him on the subject without obtaining an answer; and wrote and wrote again to him months after he was dead, so little acquainted was I with the private occurrences of our own State. Nor to this moment have I got an answer from any one on the subject, and know as little—perhaps less than you do of the situation of your affairs in Virginia—I have been in the State but once since the 4th of May, 1775,

and that was at the Siege of York. In going thither I spent one day at my own House, and in returning I took 3 or 4, without attempting to transact a particle of private business, even for myself. I do not conceive that it would be any consolation to you to hear that your neighbors were equal sufferers with yourself, or you might thank God—as an overseer in the service of your Father-in-law did, when he was rendering an account to his employer in the time of a calamitous and [*illegible*] the miserable prospect before him and the probability of their starving—that his neighbors were as bad off as himself.

The amiable Mr. Custis was taken sick at the Siege of York, and died at Colo. Bassett's the [5th] of Novr.—he has left four lovely children ; three girls and a boy (which the latter is the youngest) who were all very well and promising when we heard last from them[1]—His widow is yet single, and lives where he did, at the place formerly Robt. Alexander's (above Alexandria) which he bought and handsomely approved before his death. Mrs. Washington enjoys an incompetent share of health ; Billious Fevers and Cholics attack her very often, and reduce her low. At this moment she is but barely recovering from one of them. At the same time that she thanks Mrs. Fairfax and you for your kind suggestion of Doctr. Jones's Annatiptic Pills, she begs you both to accept her most affectionate regards—she would have conveyed these in a letter of her own with grateful acknowledgements

[1] Elizabeth Parke, born 21 August, 1776 ; Martha Parke, born 31 December, 1777 ; Eleanor Parke, born 21 March, 1779 ; and George Washington Parke, born 30 April, 1781.

of Mrs. Fairfax's kind remembrance by Mr. Lee, if her health would have allowed it.

I wait with great impatience the arrival of the Definitive Treaty—that I may quit my military employment, and bid adieu to public life—and in the shades of retirement seek that repose and tranquillity to which I have been an intire stranger for more than Eight years. I wish for it too because it will afford me some leisure to attend to an impaired fortune and recover as it were from a state of torpidity or suspension—except in the instances of having money paid to me at the depreciated value—My private concerns, my warmest and best affections attend Mrs. Fairfax and yourself—and I am &c.[1]

TO BARON STEUBEN.

INSTRUCTIONS.

In consequence of powers in me invested for that purpose, I do hereby authorize and desire you to proceed, with such despatch as you shall find convenient, into Canada, and there concert with General Haldimand, or other British commander-in-chief in that province, upon all such measures as you shall find necessary for receiving possession of the posts now under his command within the territory ceded to the United States, and at present occupied by the troops of his Britannic Majesty, and from which his said

not

[1] "A report prevails here [in Va.], said to come from Philadelphia, that our worthy general has become so unpopular in his army, that no officer will dine with him. The report is so improbable that I give no credit to it, yet I am anxious to hear from you on the subject, and also to know in what state the definitive treaty is and what now obstructs the signing of it."—*Benjamin Harrison to the Virginia Delegates in Congress*, 12 July, 1783. "We do not know," they replied on July 27th, "any color of reason for the report you mention relative to our Commander-in-chief. On the contrary, we believe that his popularity, like his merit, has not suffered the smallest diminution."

Majesty's troops are to be withdrawn, agreeably to the seventh article of the provisional treaty between his said Majesty and the United States of America.

In accomplishing this negotiation, you will obtain, if possible, from General Haldimand his assurances and orders for the immediate possession, by the United States, of the posts in question, or at least a cession of them at an early day. But if this cannot be done, you will endeavor to procure from him positive and definitive assurances, that he will, as soon as possible, give information of the time which shall be fixed on for the evacuation of those posts, and that the troops of his Britannic Majesty shall not be drawn therefrom, until sufficient previous notice shall be given of that event, that the troops of the United States may be ready to occupy the fortresses the moment they shall be abandoned by those of his Britannic Majesty.

You will propose to General Haldimand, an exchange of such artillery and stores now in the posts as you shall think proper, and which you shall judge will be of benefit to the United States, agreeing with the British commander-in-chief, that an equal number of cannon, and an equal quantity and kind of stores, as he shall consent to exchange, shall be replaced to his Britannic Majesty by the United States, at such time and place as shall be fixed on by you for the purpose.

Having formed your arrangements with General Haldimand, you will be pleased to proceed, in such manner as you shall think best, to visit the several posts and fortresses on the frontier territory of the United States as far as Detroit. View their different situation, strength, and circumstances; and, forming your judgment of their relative position, and probable advantage to the United States, you will report the same to me, with your opinion of such of them as you shall think most expedient for the United States to retain and occupy. In passing the Lake Champlain you will critically observe the width of the waters at the northern extremity, and the nature of the ground adjoining; with a view to determine whether there is any spot south of the 45th degree of north latitude, and near our extreme boundary, on which it will be convenient, (should Congress judge it expedient,) to erect forti-

fications, which would command the entrance from Canada into that lake.

At Detroit you will find a very considerable settlement, consisting mostly of French people from Canada. To these you will please to intimate the fullest sentiment of the good disposition of Congress and the inhabitants of the United States for their welfare and protection; expressing at the same time to them our expectations of finding the like disposition in them towards us, and the post which we may establish there, and any future settlement which may be formed in their neighborhood by the subjects of the United States. As the advanced season, or other unforeseen accidents, may render it difficult to get a detachment of American troops to that place before it may be convenient for the British garrison to be withdrawn from that post, you will do well to engage, in this case, some one or more of the respectable and well disposed inhabitants of the district to provide a company of militia (if there be any) or others, at the expense of the United States, to take charge of the works, buildings &c. of the fortress, assuring them such reasonable pay as shall be deemed adequate to their service, or which you may condition for. You will also make particular inquiry, whether the farmers or merchants at Detroit are able or willing to supply an American garrison at that post with provisions and other necessaries, and upon what terms.

You will please to keep me informed as fully as you can, and as often as opportunity will permit, of the progress you shall make in executing the business committed to your conduct.

Confiding perfectly in your general knowledge, good sense, judgment, and discretion, in the fulfilment of this commission, I forbear any further detail of instructions but wish you success in your negotiations, with pleasure and security in the prosecution of your tour. Given at Head-Quarters, Newburg, this 12th day of July, 1783.[1]

[1] In compliance with these instructions, Baron Steuben proceeded to Canada. He reached Chamblee on the 2d of August, and thence sent forward his aid-de-camp, Major North, to Quebec, with a message to General Haldimand announcing the object of his mission. General Haldimand was just on the eve of his departure for the upper country, and he met Baron Steuben at Sorel, on

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 16 July, 1783.

SIR,

Your Excellency's letters of the 3d and 8th are received. The Judge Advocate was gone on by my Directions before the hint you gave me in that of the 3d.

It would seem there has been some capital neglect or miscarriage in the transmission of the Act of Congress of the 12th of May. I never had the least intimation of it until the 7th instant, when I received it from the War Office.

Baron Steuben is furnished with my letters and instructions and will depart on his mission as soon as possible.

The enclosed memorial was handed to me from some officers of Hazen's regiment, refugees from Canada. Anxious for their relief from the most distressing situation, and finding myself without the means or the power of doing it, I beg leave to refer their circumstances to the particular attention and regard of Congress. These, with many others, are the men, who as they will say have left their country, their friends, their substance, their all, in support of the

the 8th of August. In regard to the first point of the instructions, General Haldimand said that he had not received orders for making any arrangements to evacuate the posts, nor for any other object than a cessation of hostilities, with which he had strictly complied. A request for passports to visit the posts, on the part of Baron Steuben, was likewise refused by General Haldimand, upon the same ground of want of orders. In short, he did not feel himself authorized to enter into any negotiations whatever, respecting the objects for which Baron Steuben had come to Canada, and the latter returned from Sorel to the American army.

liberties of America; and have followed our fortunes through the various scenes of a distressing contest, until they find it to have terminated in the happiest manner for all but themselves. Some provision is certainly due to those people, who now are exiled from their native country and habitations, without any mention made of them in the treaty, any stipulation for their return, or any means for their subsistence, in a country which their arms have contributed to secure and establish. When Congress recollect the encouragements, the promises, and assurances, which were published by them and their orders in Canada in the years 1775 and 1776, I am persuaded they will take into their most serious consideration the case of those unhappy persons, who placed confidence in those proclamations, and make ample amends by some effectual provision for their sufferings, patience, and perseverance.

I would not presume to dictate; but, if Congress cannot procure funds for their compensation and subsistence from the ample confiscations, which are making within the different States, I should think a grant could be made to them from the unlocated lands in the interior parts of our territory, and some means advanced to place them on such a tract. This perhaps might prove satisfactory, and would enable them to form a settlement, which may be beneficial to themselves, and useful to the United States. I will say no more, but repeat my recommendation of their case to the grateful remembrance of Congress, and beg, that a speedy attention may be given to the applica-

tion, which I have advised them to make without delay.

Finding myself in most disagreeable circumstances here, and like to be so, so long as Congress are pleased to continue me in this awkward situation, anxiously expecting the definitive treaty; without command, and with little else to do, than to be teased with troublesome applications and fruitless demands, which I have neither the means or the power of satisfying; in this distressing tedium I have resolved to wear away a little time, in performing a tour to the northward, as far as Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and perhaps as far up the Mohawk River as Fort Schuyler. I shall leave this place on Friday next, and shall probably be gone about two weeks, unless my tour should be interrupted by some special recall. One gentleman of my family will be left here to receive any letters or commands, and to forward to me any thing that shall be necessary. With great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 August, 1783.

SIR,

Your Excellency's several favors of the 17th, 24th, and 31st of July, were received at head-quarters during my absence, and have been presented to me on

[1] Congress had passed a resolve requesting the attendance of General Washington as soon as should be convenient, after his return from the northward.—*Journals*, July 28th.

Washington wrote to McHenry to know the meaning of the resolution, saying:

my return last evening, which I effected by water from Albany.

My tour having been extended as far northward as Crown Point, and westward to Fort Schuyler and its district, and my movements having been pretty rapid, my horses, which are not yet arrived, will be so much fatigued, that they will need some days to recruit. This circumstance, with some arrangements that will be necessary previous to my leaving this place, will prevent my complying with the pleasure of Congress, intimated in yours of the 31st, so soon perhaps as may

"I am left ignorant of the particular objects Congress have in view, any further than can be collected from the expressions of his [the President of Congress] and your letters. So far then, as they may relate to a Peace establishment, my sentiments in the freest and fullest manner have been communicated to a committee, of which Colo. Hamilton was Chairman. If the principal object in view, by my attendance, respects Congress, I cannot hesitate a moment to make the earliest compliance in my power. But, if the resolution is calculated for my own convenience, I cannot say, that it will render my situation more eligible than the present, especially taking into consideration the inconvenience of a removal for so small a distance, and a new establishment of a household, which must be formed in consequence of breaking up the menial part of my family here.

"My principal intention, in my letter of the 16th ultimo, was to express the disagreeableness of my present situation, waiting as I am, with little business and less command, for the definitive treaty, when I have so anxious a desire of retiring from public business, and re-establishing myself in domestic life, where my private concerns call loudly for my presence."—6 August, 1783.

On these points Mr. McHenry replied as follows:

"The first motive for bringing you here was to get you out of a disagreeable situation to one less disagreeable. The second was to get your assistance and advice in the arrangements for peace. It may be necessary, besides, to consult you respecting promotions, and on a variety of military subjects. I believe, on the whole, that your being near Congress will be a public good. I send you the address to be made to you from the chair, which will serve to explain the intentions of Congress."—*Princeton*, August 11th.

A house, suitably furnished, was engaged by Congress for the use of General Washington, situated at Rocky Hill, between three and four miles from Princeton.

be expected. In the mean time, your Excellency will have an opportunity of transmitting to me the resolution mentioned, that I may be acquainted with the objects Congress have in view, by my attendance at Princeton, and that I may prepare myself to fulfil their expectations to the utmost of my power.

[*Another Letter of the same date.*]—I was the more particularly induced by two considerations to make the tour, which, in my letter of the 16th ultimo, I informed Congress I had in contemplation, and from which I returned last evening. The one was an inclination of seeing the northern and western posts of this State, with those places which have been the theatre of important military transactions; the other, a desire to facilitate, (as far as is in my power,) the operations, which will be necessary for occupying the posts which are ceded by the treaty of peace as soon as they shall be evacuated by the British troops.

Aware of the difficulties we should have to encounter in accomplishing the last mentioned object, on account of the advanced season, and the want of money to give vigor to our movements, I inserted a clause in the instructions of Baron Steuben, (a copy of which I have the honor to enclose,) authorizing him, in case those difficulties should be insurmountable, or in case the arrival of the definitive treaty should be delayed beyond expectation, to agree with some of the respectable and well affected inhabitants of Detroit to preserve the fortifications and public buildings at that place, until such time as a garrison could be sent with provisions and stores sufficient to take and hold possession of them. The propriety of

this measure has appeared in a more forcible point of view, since I have been up the Mohawk River, and taken a view of the situation of things in that quarter; for, upon a careful inquiry, I find it is the opinion of those, who are best acquainted with the distances and communications, that nothing short of the greatest exertion, and a sum adequate to the transportation, can even at this season furnish us with boats, and enable us to forward provisions and stores sufficient for a garrison to be supported at Detroit during the ensuing winter; and, without an immediate supply of money, it would be in vain to make the attempt.

Influenced by this information, believing there was not a moment to be lost, and apprehending the Baron Steuben might be retarded in his progress by some unforeseen event, I engaged at Fort Rensselaer a gentleman, whose name is Cassaty, formerly a resident at Detroit, and who is well recommended, to proceed without loss of time, find out the disposition of the inhabitants, and make every previous inquiry, which might be necessary for the information of the Baron on his arrival, that he should be able to make such final arrangements, as the circumstances might appear to justify. This seemed to be the best alternative on failure of furnishing a garrison of our own troops; which, for many reasons, would be infinitely the most eligible mode, if the season and your means would possibly admit.

I have at the same time endeavored to take the best preparatory steps in my power for supplying all the garrisons on the western waters by the provision contract. I can only form my magazine at Fort Her-

kimer, on the German Flats, which is thirty-two miles by land and almost fifty by water from the carrying-place between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek. The route by the former is impracticable in the present state for carriages; and by the other extremely difficult for batteaux, as the river is very much obstructed with fallen and floating trees, from the long disuse of the navigation. That nothing, however, which depends upon me, might be left undone, I have directed ten months' provision for five hundred men to be laid up at Fort Herkimer, and have ordered Colonel Willett, (an active and good officer commanding the troops of this State,) to repair the roads, remove the obstructions in the river, and, as far as can be effected by the labors of the soldiers, build houses for the reception of the provision and stores at the carrying-place, in order that the whole may be in perfect readiness to move forward, so soon as the arrangements shall be made with General Haldimand. I shall give instructions to Major-General Knox, to have such ordnance and stores forwarded to Albany, as in the present view of matters may be judged necessary for the western posts; and I will also write to the quartermaster-general, by this conveyance, on the subject of batteaux and the other articles, which may be required from his department. However, without money to provide some boats, and to pay the expense of transportation, it will be next to impossible to get these things even to Niagara. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, August 11th. On September 10th, referred to Duane, Peters, Carroll, Hawkins, and Arthur Lee.

While this letter was writing, the members of Congress had under con-

TO ROBERT STEWART.

STATE OF NEW YORK, 10 August, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received with much pleasure by the last mail from Philadelphia, your favor of the 19th of April from London.—For the affectionate and flattering expressions contained therein you will please to accept my warmest and most grateful acknowledgements.

This Letter removed an apprehension I had long labored under, of your having taken your departure

sideration a mode of conferring new honors on the man who had rendered such distinguished services to his country; and the next day the following resolves were passed.

"Resolved unanimously, (ten States being present) that an equestrian statue of General Washington be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established.

"Resolved, that the statue be of bronze; the General to be represented in a Roman dress, holding a truncheon in his right hand, and his head encircled with a laurel wreath; the statue to be supported by a marble pedestal, on which are to be represented, in *basso-rilievo*, the following principal events of the war, in which General Washington commanded in person; namely, the evacuation of Boston; the capture of the Hessians at Trenton; the battle of Princeton; the action of Monmouth; and the surrender of York. On the upper part of the front of the pedestal to be engraved as follows, '*The United States, in Congress assembled, ordered this statue to be erected in the year of our Lord 1783, in honor of George Washington, the illustrious Commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States of America, during the war, which vindicated and secured their liberty, sovereignty, and independence.*'

"Resolved, that a statue conformable to the above plan be executed by the best artist in Europe, under the superintendence of the minister of the United States at the court of Versailles, and that money to defray the expense of the same be furnished from the treasury of the United States.

"Resolved, that the secretary of Congress transmit to the minister of the United States at the court of Versailles the best resemblance of General Washington, that can be procured, for the purpose of having the above statue erected, together with the fittest description of the events, which are to be the subject of the *basso-rilievo*."—*Journals*, August 7th.—*Sparks*.

This statue, "the only mark of public gratitude," wrote the French Minister to Luzerne "which Washington can accept, and the only one which the government in its poverty can offer," has never been executed.

for the Land of Spirits. How else could I account for a Silence of full 15 years; for I think it must be at least that much since I have heard from you, and not less than 9 or 10 since I could hear a little of you: altho' when I had opportunities, I made it a point to enquire.

You may be assured, Sir, that I should ever feel pleasure in rendering you any service in my power; but I will not be so uncandid as to flatter your expectations or give you any hope of my doing it in the way you seem to expect. In a contest,—long, arduous and painful; which has brought forth the abilities of men in Military and Civil life, and exposed them with Halters about their necks, not only to imminent danger, but many of them to the verge of poverty and the very brink of ruin, justice requires and a grateful government certainly will bestow those places of honor and profit, which necessity must create, upon those who have risked life, fortune and Home to support its cause. But independent of these considerations, I have never interfered in any Civil appointments, and I only wait (and with anxious impatience) the arrival of the definitive treaty, that I may take leave of my Military Employments and by bidding adieu to Public life, forever enjoy in the shades of retirement that ease and tranquillity to which, for more than eight years, I have been an entire stranger, and for which, a mind which has been constantly on the stretch during that period, and perplexed with a thousand embarrassing circumstances, often times without a ray of light to guide it, stands much in need.

Gratitude to a nation to whom I think America owes much and an ardent desire to see the country and customs of the French People, are strong inducements to make a visit to France; but a consideration more powerful than these will, I dare say, be an insuperable Bar to such a tour. An impaired fortune (much injured by this contest,) must turn me into those walks of retirement, where perhaps, the consciousness of having discharged to the best of my abilities the great trust reposed in me and the duty I owed my country must supply the place of other gratifications, and may perhaps afford as rational and substantial entertainment as the gayer scenes of a more enlarged theatre.

I shall always be happy to see you at Mt. Vernon. Mrs. Washington, who enjoys but a very moderate share of health, unites in best wishes for your health and prosperity. With, Dr. Sir, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 14 August, 1783.

SIR,

By the last post I was honored with your Excellency's favor of the 1st instant, enclosing the resolve of Congress directing my attendance at Princeton.

Notwithstanding my horses had arrived but a day

[1] Among others who took this opportunity of recalling themselves to Washington was a Major Ellis, an officer in the British army. Washington replied on July 10th: "You profess not to be a panegyrist, while you are bestowing the most exalted praise; but, compliments apart, I received your very polite letter of the 25th of March with much pleasure. It recalled to my remembrance some of the pleasing occurrences of my past life, and reminded me of the

or two before, and were much fatigued, I should have set out immediately, had it not been for the indisposition of Mrs. Washington, who, during my absence, had been seized with a fever, had a return of it since, and is now in a very weak and low state. This circumstance, together with a desire of packing my papers and making arrangements for a final remove, (being uncertain of the objects Congress have in view, by my attendance, or how long I may be detained at Princeton,) will, I hope, avail as an excuse for my delay.

I propose to set out on Monday next, provided Mrs. Washington's health will admit, or I should not have any thing from Congress in the mean time, to prevent the execution of my intentions. I am, &c.[1]

acquaintances I had formed in it; for whom, though separated by time, distance, and political sentiments, I retain the same friendship.

"I was opposed to the policy of Great Britain, and became an enemy to her measures; but I always distinguished between a cause and individuals; and, while the latter supported their opinions upon liberal and generous grounds, personally I never could be an enemy to them."

[1] Read in Congress, August 22d.

From the Orderly Book.—"The Commander-in-chief, having been requested by Congress to give his attendance at Princeton, proposes to set out for that place to-morrow; but he expects to have the pleasure of seeing the army again before he retires to private life. During his absence, Major-General Knox will retain the command of the troops, and all reports are to be made to him accordingly."—August 17th.

This is the last record entered in the Orderly Book. General Washington arrived at Princeton, and had a formal public audience of Congress on the 26th of August.

In a letter dated 17 August, 1783, Carleton informed the President of Congress of the late arrival of the June packet, bringing him private orders for the evacuation of New York, and that there should be no delay "as far as it depends upon me in fulfilling his Majesty's commands." He also expressed a wish that the violence shown against the loyalists might abate, as he would feel in honor bound to extend to them such protection as their loyalty demanded, notwithstanding his orders.

ADDRESS TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.[1]

PRINCETON, 26 August, 1783.

MR. PRESIDENT,

I am too sensible of the honorable reception I have now experienced, not to be penetrated with the deepest feelings of gratitude.

Notwithstanding Congress appear to estimate the value of my life beyond any services I have been able to render the United States, yet I must be permitted to consider the wisdom, and unanimity of our national councils, the firmness of our citizens, and the patience and bravery of our troops, which have produced so happy a termination of the war, as the most conspicuous effect of the Divine interposition, and the surest presage of our future happiness.

Highly gratified by the favorable sentiments, which Congress are pleased to express of my past conduct, and amply rewarded by the confidence and affection of my fellow citizens, I cannot

[1] When General Washington entered the hall of Congress, he was attended and introduced by two members, and the following *Address* (to which the above was a reply) was made to him by the President, Elias Boudinot :

"Congress feel a particular pleasure in seeing your Excellency, and in congratulating you on the success of a war, in which you have acted so conspicuous a part.

"It has been the particular happiness of the United States, that, during a war so long, so dangerous, and so important, Providence has been graciously pleased to preserve the life of a general, who has merited and possessed the uninterrupted confidence and affection of his fellow citizens. In other nations, many have performed eminent services, for which they have deserved the thanks of the public. But to you, Sir, peculiar praise is due. Your services have been essential in acquiring and establishing the freedom and independence of your country. They deserve the grateful acknowledgments of a free and independent nation. Those acknowledgments Congress have the satisfaction of expressing to your Excellency.

"Hostilities have now ceased ; but your country still needs your services. She wishes to avail herself of your talents in forming the arrangements, that will be necessary for her security in the time of peace. For this reason your attendance at Congress has been requested. A committee is appointed to confer with your Excellency, and to receive your assistance in preparing and digesting plans relative to those important objects."

hesitate to contribute my best endeavors towards the establishment of the national security, in whatever manner the sovereign power may think proper to direct, until the ratification of the definitive treaty of peace, or the final evacuation of our country by the British forces; after either of which events, I shall ask permission to retire to the peaceful shades of private life.

Perhaps, Sir, no occasion may offer more suitable than the present, to express my humble thanks to God, and my grateful acknowledgments to my country, for the great and uniform support I have received in every vicissitude of fortune, and for the many distinguished honors, which Congress have been pleased to confer upon me in the course of the war.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILLIAM S. SMITH.

ROCKY HILL, 31 August, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 26th, and am much obliged by your attention in procuring the articles I had requested. I am also glad to find there is at length a prospect, that the British will in reality soon take their departure from the United States.

Whatever my private sentiments as an individual may be respecting the violent policy, which seems in some instances to be adopted, it is not for us, as military characters, to dictate a different line of conduct. But I should suppose the encouragement you have given to those British and foreign soldiers, who have been discharged, that they would be permitted to remain in the country, was very unexceptionable and proper. The same indulgence, however, cannot be extended to such natives of the country as have served in their new corps, without the particular interference

of the States to which they belong. And I thing if necessary you should be advised, that granting passports to citizens, of any description, for the purpose of giving protection in coming from New York into the country, may not only be considered as an assumption beyond the limits of any commission, which has been derived from Congress, but will probably be productive of altercations with the civil powers, and at the same time involve us in very disagreeable consequences in many other respects. I am, dear sir, with very great esteem yours, &c.[1]

TO MRS. RICHARD STOCKTON.[2]

ROCKY HILL, 2 September, 1783.

You apply to me, my dear Madam, for absolution as tho' I was your father Confessor; and as tho' you had committed a crime, great in itself, yet of the venial class. You have reason good—for I find myself strangely disposed to be a very indulgent ghostly adviser on this occasion; and, notwithstanding "you are the most offending Soul alive" (that is, if it is a crime to write

note

[1] It was the opinion of Colonel Smith that there were not less than fifteen thousand persons in New York who wished to remain, and were not conscious of any other crime than that of residing within the British lines, but who would be driven from the country if rigid laws were put in execution against them; "in consequence of which," said he, "upon the evacuation we shall find a city destitute of inhabitants, and settlements made on our frontiers by a people, who (their minds being soured by the severity of their treatment,) will prove troublesome neighbors, and perhaps lay the foundation of future contests, which I suppose it would be for the interest of our country to avoid."

[2] Mrs. Stockton was Annis Boudinot, a sister of Elias Boudinot, and wife of Richard Stockton, of New Jersey. She was the writer of the stanzas sung by the ladies of Trenton when Washington passed through that place on his journey to New York, to be inaugurated President.

elegant Poetry,) yet if you will come and dine with me on Thursday, and go thro' the proper course of penitence which shall be prescribed, I will strive hard to assist you in expiating these poetical trespasses on this side of purgatory. Nay more, if it rests with me to direct your future lucubrations, I shall certainly urge you to a repetition of the same conduct, on purpose to shew what an admirable knack you have at confession and reformation; and so without more hesitation, I shall venture to command the muse, not to be restrained by ill-grounded timidity, but to go on and prosper.—You see, Madam, when once the woman has tempted us, and we have tasted the forbidden fruit, there is no such thing as checking our appetites, whatever the consequences may be. You will, I dare say, recognize our being the genuine Descendents of those who are reputed to be our great Progenitors.

Before I come to the more serious conclusion of my Letter—I must beg leave to say a word or two about these fine things you have seen telling in such harmonious and beautiful numbers. Fiction is to be sure the very life and Soul of Poetry—all Poets and Poetesses have been indulged in the free and indisputable use of it, time out of mind. And to oblige you to make such an excellent Poem on such a subject, without any materials but those of simple reality, would be as cruel as the Edict of Pharoah which compelled the children of Israel to manufacture Bricks without the necessary Ingredients.

Thus are you sheltered under the authority of prescription, and I will not dare to charge you with an

intentional breach of the Rules of the decalogue in giving so bright a coloring to the services I have been enabled to render my Country; tho' I am not conscious of deserving any thing more at your hands, than what the purest and most disinterested friendship has a right to claim; actuated by which, you will permit me, to thank you in the most affectionate manner for the kind wishes you have so happily expressed for me and the partner of all my Domestic enjoyments—Be assured we can never forget our friend at Merven; and that I am, my dear Madam, with every sentiment &c.

TO JAMES DUANE, IN CONGRESS.

ROCKY HILL, 7 September, 1783.

SIR,

I have carefully perused the papers, which you put into my hands, relative to Indian affairs. My Sentiments, with respect to the proper line of conduct to be observed towards these people, coincide precisely with those delivered by Genl. Schuyler, so far as he has gone, in his Letter of the 29th July to Congress (which, with the other Papers, is herewith returned), and for the reasons he has there assigned; a repetition of them therefore by me would be unnecessary. But, independent of the arguments made use of by him, the following considerations have no small weight in my mind.

To suffer a wide-extended Country to be overrun with Land Jobbers, speculators, and monopolizers, or even with scattered settlers, is in my opinion

inconsistent with that wisdom and policy, which our true interest dictates, or that an enlightened people ought to adopt; and, besides, is pregnant of disputes both with the Savages and among ourselves, the evils of which are easier to be conceived than described. And for what, but to aggrandize a few avaricious men, to the prejudice of many and the embarrassment of Government? For the People engaged in these pursuits, without contributing in the smallest degree to the support of Government, or considering themselves as amenable to its Laws, will involve it, by their unrestrained conduct, in inextricable perplexities, and more than probably in a great deal of bloodshed.

My ideas, therefore, of the line of conduct proper to be observed, not only towards the Indians, but for the government of the Citizens of America, in their Settlement of the Western Country, (which is intimately connected therewith,) are simply these.

First, and as a preliminary, that all prisoners, of whatever age or sex, among the Indians, shall be delivered up.

That the Indians should be informed, that after a Contest of eight years for the Sovereignty of this Country, Great Britain has ceded all the lands to the United States within the limits described by the—article of the provisional treaty.

note

That as they (the Indians), maugre all the advice and admonition which could be given them at the commencement and during the prosecution of the war, could not be restrained from acts of hostility, but were

determined to join their arms to those of G. Britain and to share their fortunes, so consequently, with a less generous people than Americans, they would be made to share the same fate, and be compelled to retire along with them beyond the Lakes. But, as we prefer Peace to a state of Warfare; as we consider them as a deluded People; as we persuade ourselves that they are convinced, from experience, of their error in taking up the Hatchet against us, and that their true Interest and safety must now depend upon *our* friendship; as the Country is large enough to contain us all; and as we are disposed to be kind to them and to partake of their Trade, we will, from these considerations and from motives of compassion, draw a veil over what is past, and establish a boundary line between them and us, beyond which we will *endeavor* to restrain our People from Hunting or Settling, and within which they shall not come but for the purposes of Trading, Treating, or other business unexceptionable in its nature.

In establishing this line, in the first instance, care should be taken neither to yield nor to grasp at too much; but to endeavor to impress the Indians with an idea of the generosity of our disposition to accommodate them, and with the necessity we are under, of providing for our warriors, our Young People who are growing up, and strangers who are coming from other Countries to live among us, and if they should make a point of it, or appear dissatisfied with the line we may find it necessary to establish, compensation should be made them for their claims within it.

It is needless for me to express more explicitly, because the tendency of my observns. evinces it is my opinion, that, if the legislature of the State of New York should insist upon expelling the Six Nations from all the Country they Inhabited previous to the war, within their Territory, (as General Schuyler seems to be apprehensive of,) it will end in another Indian war. I have every reason to believe from my inquiries, and the information I have received, that they will not suffer their Country (if it were our policy to take it before we could settle it) to be wrested from them without another struggle. That they would compromise for a part of it, I have very little doubt; and that it would be the cheapest way of coming at it, I have no doubt at all. The same observations, I am persuaded, will hold good with respect to Virginia, or any other State, which has powerful tribes of Indians on their Frontiers; and the reason of my mentioning New York is because General Schuyler has expressed his opinion of the temper of its Legislature, and because I have been more in the way of learning the sentimts. of the Six Nations than of any other Tribes of Indians on this Subject.

The limits being sufficiently extensive, in the new ctry., to comply with all the engagements of government, and to admit such emigrations as may be supposed to happen within a given time, not only from the several States of the Union but from Foreign Countries, and, moreover, of such magnitude as to form a distinct and proper government; a Proclamation, in my opinion, should issue, making it Felony

(if there is power for the purpose, if not, imposing some very heavy restraint) for any person to Survey or Settle beyond the Line; and the Officers commanding the Frontier Garrisons should have pointed and peremptory orders to see that the Proclamation is carried into effect.

Measures of this sort would not only obtain Peace from the Indians, but would, in my opinion, be the means of preserving it. It would dispose of the Land to the best advantage, People the Country progressively ,and check land jobbing and monopolizing, which are now going forward with great avidity, while the door would be open and terms known for every one to obtain what is reasonable and proper for himself, upon legal and constitutional ground.

Every advantage, that could be expected or even wished for, would result from such a mode of procedure. Our settlements would be compact, government well established, and our barrier formidable, not only for ourselves but against our neighs. ; and the Indians, as has been observed in Genl. Schuyler's letter, will ever retreat as our settlements advance upon them, and they will be as ready to sell, as we are to buy. That it is the cheapest, as well as the least distressing way of dealing with them, none, who is acquainted with the nature of an Indian warfare, and has ever been at the trouble of estimating the expense of one, and comparing it with the cost of purchasing their Lands, will hesitate to acknowledge. note

Unless some such measures, as I have here taken the liberty of suggesting, are speedily adopted, one of

two capital evils, in my opinion, will inevitably result, and is near at hand; either that the settling, or rather overspreading, of the western Country will take place by a parcel of Banditti, who will bid defiance to all authority, while they are skimming and disposing of the Cream of the Country at the expense of many suffering officers and soldiers, who have fought and bled to obtain it, and are now waiting the decision of Congress to point them to the promised reward of their past dangers and toils; or a renewal of Hostilities with the Indians, brought about more than probably by this very means.

How far agents for Indian affrs. are indispensably necessary, I shall not take upon me to decide; but, if any should be appointed, their powers should be circumscribed, accurately defined, and themselves rigidly punished for every infraction of them. A recurrence to the conduct of these people, under the British administration of Indian affairs, will manifest the propriety of this caution, as it will be there found that self-Interest was the principle by which their agents was actuated; and to promote this by accumulating Lands and passing large quantities of goods thro' their hands, the Indians were made to speak any language they pleased by their representation, and were pacific or hostile as their purposes were most likely to be promoted by the one or the other. No purchase under any pretence whatever should be made by any other authority than that of the sovereign power, or the Legislature of the State in which such Lands may happen to be; nor should the agents be permitted di-

rectly or indirectly to trade, but to have a fixed and ample Salary allowed them, as a full compensation for their trouble,

Whether in practice the measure may answer as well as it appears in theory to me, I will not undertake to say; but I think, if the Indian Trade was carried on, on government acct. and with no greater advance than what would be necessary to defray the expense and risk, and bring in a small profit, that it would supply the Indians upon much easier terms than they usually are, engross their Trade, and fix them strongly in our Interest, and would be a much better mode of treating them, than that of giving presents, where a few only are benefited by them. I confess there is a difficulty in getting a man, or set of men, in whose abilities and integrity there can be a perfect reliance, without which the scheme is liable to such abuse as to defeat the salutary ends, which are proposed from it. At any rate, no person should be suffered to Trade with the Indians without first obtaining a license, and giving security to conform to such Rules and Regulations as shall be prescribed, as was the case before the war.

In giving my sentiments in the month of May last (at the request of a Committee of Congress) on a Peace Establishmt., I took the liberty of suggesting the propriety, which in my opinion there appeared, of paying particular attention to the French and other settlers at Detroit and other parts within the limits of the western Country. The perusal of a late pamphlet, entitled "Observations on the Commerce of the

American States with Europe and the West Indies," impresses the necessity of it more forcibly then ever on my mind. The author of that Piece strongly recommends a liberal change in the government of Canada; and, tho' he is too sanguine in his expectations of the benefits arising from it, there can be no doubt of the good policy of the measure. It behoves us, therefore, to counteract them by anticipation. These People have a disposition towards us susceptible of favorable impressions; but, as no arts will be left unattempted by the B. to withdraw them from our Interest, the prest. moment should be employed by us to fix them in it, or we may lose them for ever, and with them the advantages or disadvantages consequent of the choice they may make. From the best information and maps of that Country it would appear, that the territory from the mouth of the Great Miami River, wch. empties into the Ohio, to its confluence with the Mad River, thence by a Line to the Miami fort and Village on the other Miami River, wch. empties into Lake Erie, and Thence by a Line to include the Settlement of Detroit, would, with Lake Erie to the noward, Pensa. to the Eastwd., and the Ohio to the soward, form a governmt. sufficiently extensive to fulfil all the public engagements, and to receive moreover a large population by Emigrants; and to confine the Settlement of the new State within these bounds would, in my opinion, be infinitely better, even supposing no disputes were to happen with the Indians, and that it was not necessary to guard against these other evils which have been enumerated, than to suf-

fer the same number of People to roam over a Country of at least 500,000 Square miles, contributing nothing to the support, but much perhaps to the embarrassment, of the Federal Government.

Was it not for the purpose of comprehending the Settlement of Detroit within the Jurisdn. of the new Governmt., a more compact and better shaped district for a State would be, for the line to proceed from the Miami Fort and Village along the River of that name to Lake Erie; leaving in that case the settlement of Detroit, and all the Territory no. of the Rivers Miami and St. Joseph's between the Lakes Erie, St. Clair, Huron, and Michigan, to form hereafter another State equally large, compact, and water-bounded.

At first view it may seem a little extraneous, when I am called upon to give an opinion upon the terms of a Peace proper to be made with the Indians, that I should go into the formation of New States. But the Settlemt. of the Western Country, and making a Peace with the Indians, are so analogous, that there can be no definition of the one, without involving considerations of the other; for, I repeat it again, and I am clear in my opinion, that policy and œconomy point very strongly to the expediency of being upon good terms with the Indians, and the propriety of purchasing their Lands in preference to attempting to drive them by force of arms out of their Country; which, as we have already experienced, is like driving the wild Beasts of ye forest, which will return as soon as the pursuit is at an end, and fall perhaps upon those that are left there; when the gradual extension of our

settlements will as certainly cause the savage, as the wolf, to retire; both being beasts of prey, tho' they differ in shape. In a word, there is nothing to be obtained by an Indian war, but the soil they live on, and this can be had by purchase at less expense, and without that bloodshed and those distresses, which helpless women and children are made partakers of in all kinds of disputes with them.

If there is any thing in these thoughts, (which I have fully and freely communicated,) worthy of attention, I shall be happy, and am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

P. S. A formal Address and Memorial from the Oneita Indians when I was on the Mohawk River, setting forth their Grievances and distresses and praying relief, induced me to order a pound of Powder and 3 pounds of Lead to be issued to each man from the Military Magazines in the care of Colo. Willett—This I presume was unknown to Genl. Schuyler at the time he recommended the like measure in his Letter to Congress.

OBSERVATIONS UPON A PEACE ESTABLISHMENT.

ROCKY HILL, 8 September, 1783.

Upon a careful examination of the Report delivered to Congress the 17th of June, by the Committee on the Peace Arrangement, the following remarks have occurred.

Notwithstanding there may not be any very essential difference between the proposed *Plan* for a standing Force now under consideration, and the Sketches which were given in my Memorial of the 1st of May; yet it is my wish to make known the Motives which induced me to offer my former opinions, together with the

reasons which now lead me to differ in judgment from the Committee in some instances respecting the Peace Arrangement, and to alter my sentiments on other points in consequence of new informations which have been produced by further discussion.

The principal reasons for my proposing that the Pay and Subsistence of the Officers should remain the same as they now are (except in the instances specified) were, because, that compensation had generally been deemed adequate and not too high ;—and because we had found by experience after many changes and alterations, the present allowance to be better proportioned to the different grades, more satisfactory to the Officers and less inconvenient to the Public than any System which had been attempted. Nor can I agree with the Committee that the Establishment reported by them is more œconomical than either of the Plans which have been proposed, since the number of Men in their Establishment actually to be raised, exceeds that suggested in my Memorial by upwards of four hundred. And the encrease of Pay in consequence of an additional number of Superior Officers in the Corps of Engineers will more than Counterbalance the saving which will be made by the proposed diminution of the Pay of the regimental Staff, & Subalterns. And yet I know not whether this encrease of Expence may not be expedient and necessary—At least I should not make any objection to the augmentation of the number of Men in the Infantry Comp'ys as the various and dispersed services, to which they will be destined, may probably require more than I had taken into my calculation. And the blending the Engineers and Artillerists of the Army in one Corps may make it requisite to add the number of Officers proposed by the Committee ; which will under those circumstances justify a departure from the present Artillery Establishment on which my Estimate was founded. And here I will take the liberty to suggest the expediency of restraining all officers stationed in the Indian Country from carrying on, directly or indirectly any Commerce or Traffic whatever with the Nations,—it would be better to make a pecuniary compensation for any extra trouble of the Commanding Officer, in giving passes, and regulating these things than to suffer so pernicious a custom to take place.

Perhaps it is rather unimportant in what manner some little alterations shall be decided, as for instance, whether the third Officer of a Company shall be called a Lieutenant or an Ensign, provided the duties and emoluments are perfectly defined ; but I highly approve the Scheme of having Supernumeraries appointed to fill the Staff-Officers, without depriving the Companys of their full proportion of Officers.

The same reason which makes it proper to have two Sergeant-Majors, &c. in each Regiment of Infantry, will also make it equally necessary to have two Surgeon's mates.

It appears to me in case the Pay of the Privates shall be established at two Dollars per Month, that a considerable Bounty will be required to inlist them ; or that the States after having their quotas apportioned to them must be obliged to keep their Complement constantly in Service. I am also of opinion that to the annual allowance of Clothing per Man One Blanket, two pair Woolen Hose, and one or two Shirts should be added ; also 8 or 10 match Coats, per Company.

The rule of promotion proposed seems unexceptionable ; but the perpetual confusion which must ensue from promotions being made in a Corps composed of Officers and Men of different States, by the Authority of each of those different States, will totally destroy all regularity in our Military System—it would indeed be much to be preferred that the States could be induced to transfer this right to Congress. And possibly, upon condition of confining the appointment and proportion of Officers in equal proportions to the particular States whose Troops form a Regiment the right might be yielded. For example, if New Hampshire gives two Companys and Masstts. Six, the Officers then to be appointed and kept in service from those two States to be in as nearly the Ratio of 2 to 6 as possible ; the same, if another Regiment should be formed by the States of R. Island, Connect., New York, and New Jersey, &c., &c.

On the Committee's Report respecting Fortifications, Arsenals and Magazines, Military Academies, Founderies and Manufactories, General Staff, and General Hospital, no observations are necessary—except that if it is the opinion of the Committee, the

establishment of five instead of three Magazines, is necessary, I shall not make any hesitation in yielding to their sentiment. I wish not to be too tenacious tho' the division of the Continent into three districts had been suggested, in addition to the reasons I formerly mentioned, by a similar distribution which Congress had made in the Article of promotion. But I must beg leave to remark that the general outlines for the establishment of the National Militia do not seem to me to be so well calculated to answer the object in view as could be wished. Altho' unacquainted as I am with the Militia Laws of the several States, I cannot undertake to say what particular regulation should be adopted for classing, or forming the great Body of Citizens, who must be borne on the Rolls of the Militia, and for obliging them to march for the public defence in a manner least inconvenient and most effectual; Yet I cannot but think some more eligible Plan could be devised. And I am fully persuaded that the Fensibles, Fusiliers,—or Train Bands formed of the Inhabitants of Cities and Incorporated Towns will not afford that prompt and efficacious resistance to an Enemy, which might be expected from regularly established Light Infantry Companies, or a general selection of the ablest Men from every Regiment or Brigade of Militia in either of the modes I had formerly the honor to propose; because such an Establishment would, in my opinion, be more agreeable to the genius of our Countrymen; because it would distribute military knowledge and ambition more equally and extensively; because it would on these accounts prevent Jealousies, and afford the same kind of protection to every part of the Union, which the Companys designated by the name of Minute Men did at the Commencement of the late war; and because, the number being fixed to any proportion from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{60}$ of the whole Militia; that number of disciplined effective men may always be relied on in case of a war as an effectual Barrier to stop the torrent of Hostility; until a regular and permanent force could be levied,—And in order to make this Corps the more respectable, I should heartily concur in giving them a superiority of rank, immunities or emoluments over the rest of the Militia.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

ROCKY HILL, 11 September, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

It was with great concern I heard of your indisposition. Later accounts say you were on the recovery, and nothing would give me more pleasure, than the confirmation of it, from under your own hand.

I am not able to give you any information on the point you requested at our parting. Congress have come to no determination *yet*, respecting a Peace Establishment, nor am I able to say when they will. I have lately had a conference with a committee on this subject, and have reiterated my former opinions, but it appears to me, that there is not a sufficient representation to discuss *Great* National points; nor do I believe there will be, while that Honble. Body continue their Sessions at this place. The want of accommodation, added to a disinclination in the Southern Delegates to be further removed than they formerly were from the Centre of the Empire, and an aversion in the others to give up what they conceive to be a point gained by the late retreat to this place, keeps matters in an awkward situation, to the very great interruption of national concerns. Seven States, it seems, (by the articles of Confederation,) must agree, before any place can be fixed upon for the seat of the Federal Governmt., and Seven States, it is said, never will agree; consequently, as Congress came here, here they are to remn. to the dissatisfaction of the majority and a great let to business, having none of the Public offices about them, nor no places to accommodate

them, if they were brought up; and the members, from this or some other causes, are eternally absent. Mrs. Washington has had a severe return of the Colic since she came to this place but is now as well as usual. She joins me very cordially in best wishes for your perfect recovery and in affectionate Compliments to Messrs. Clinton, Huntington, Gerry & Duane. With the sincerest esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO LUND WASHINGTON.

ROCKY HILL, 20 September, 1783.

DEAR LUND,

Mrs. Custis has never suggested in any of her letters to Mrs. Washington (unless ardent wishes for her return, that she might then disclose it to her, can be so construed) the most distant attachment to

[1] "I have learnt since I came to this place that you are at Borden Town; whether for the sake of retirement or œconomy I know not, be it either—for both—or whatever it may, if you will come to this place and partake of my Board, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you at it. Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this Country, and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered chearfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works."—*Washington to Thomas Paine*, 10 September, 1783.

"Perhaps, among the multiplicity of public concerns, an attention to the situation of the troops on furlough, may have yielded to more urgent business; but this being also a matter of importance, I take the liberty of bringing it to view; as, on the footing they stand at present, a considerable expence without the prospect of an adequate benefit, is incurred; unless the impolicy of giving by public Proclamation, authenticity to the discharges while the British forces remain in New York, can be deemed such. I call them discharges, because it is in this light the Furloughs have all along been considered; and no call, I am persuaded, will ever bring the common soldiery back to their colors—the whole matter therefore lyes, in ballancing properly between the expence of delay, and the public annunciation at an epocha which may be premature."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 19 September, 1783.

D[avid] S[tuart]; but, if this should be the case, and she wants advice upon it, a father and mother, who are at hand and competent to give it, are at the same time the most proper to be consulted on so interesting an event. For my own part, I never did, nor do I believe I ever shall, give advice to a woman, who is setting out on a matrimonial voyage; first, because I never could advise one to marry without her own consent; and, secondly, because I know it is to no purpose to advise her to refrain, when she has obtained it. A woman very rarely asks an opinion or requires advice on such an occasion, till her resolution is formed; and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, not that she means to be governed by your disapprobation, that she applies. In a word, the plain English of the application may be summed up in these words; "I wish you to think as I do; but, if unhappily you differ from me in opinion, my heart, I must confess, is fixed, and I have gone too far *now* to retract."

If Mrs. Custis should ever suggest any thing of this kind to me, I will give her my opinion of the *measure*, not of the *man*, with candor, and to the following effect. "I never expected you would spend the residue of your days in widowhood; but in a matter so important, and so interesing to yourself, children, and connexions, I wish you would make a prudent choice. To do which, many considerations are necessary; such as the family and connexions of the man, his fortune (which is not the *most* essential in my eye), the line of conduct he has observed, and disposition and

frame of his mind. You should consider what prospect there is of his proving kind and affectionate to you; just, generous, and attentive to your children; and how far his connexions will be agreeable to you; for when they are once formed, agreeable or not, the die being cast, your fate is fixed." Thus far, and no farther, I shall go in my opinions. I am, dear Lund, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

ROCKY HILL, 23 September, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

The favorable Sentiments expressed in your private letter of the 17th Inst., and which you say are felt by the Officers in general on the late honor conferred upon me by Congress, cannot fail of adding greatly to my sensibility on the occasion. It always has, and I trust ever will be, the most pleasing reflection of my life that in a contest so important, so long, and so arduous,—accompanied by such a variety of distressing and perplexing circumstances to all who have been engaged in it but more especially to the Officers of the Army, that I have been able, under all these disadvantages, to point my course in such a manner as to have receiv'd many flattering testimonies of regard from the latter, and proofs of general esteem from my Country at large.

I have left no opportunity unimproved to bring the Officers' Petition to an Issue.—I have not heard an uplifted voice against it since I came to this place; and if I am to form a judgment from what I have seen

& heard, Congress is sincerely disposed to serve them —but there *was* a difficulty in the way of which I had no knowledge 'till I came here, and it is not *absolutely* got over yet.

That district of Country located by the Petitioners is part of the Land claimed by Virginia—Virginia, with certain reservations, and upon condition that the United States should Guarantee the remainder of her Territory, ceded all the Lands Northwest of the Ohio —To these terms Congress would not agree—Thus matters had stood for more than two years—and thus I found them when I came here.—I have labored since, and I hope not unsuccessfully, to convince the Members of Congress that while the United States and the State of Virginia are disputing about the right, or the terms of the Cession, Land jobbers and a lawless Banditti, who would bid defiance to the authority of either, and more than probably involve this Country in an Indian War, would spread themselves over the whole of it, to the great injury to the Officers, &c., of the Army, who are patiently waiting the decision of Congress to settle in a legal manner and under a proper form of Government.

Within these few days, Congress have accepted the Virginia Cession with some exceptions which the Delegates from that State *think* will be yielded to by the Assembly at its next meeting in October—In the meantime, if it can be done with propriety, I will endeavor to have preparatory arrangements made that no delay may happen when the present difficulties shall be removed.

As I have never heard it suggested by any *Member of Congress* that General Lincoln either had offered, or proposed to offer his resignation upon the arrival of the Definitive Treaty (tho' I have understood as much from himself) I have no ground, as yet, to work upon; but whenever the occasion shall offer, I will not forget your wishes, nor shall I want inclination to promote them.—

If you can learn by indirect means which of, or whether all the Engineers now at West point—(if you could extend it to others thro' that channel so much the better)—are inclined to remain in the American Service upon a Peace establishment I would thank you for the information.

I shall be obliged to you for pointing out, in *precise terms*, what is expected from the President of the Cincinnati previous to the general Meeting in May next—As I never was present at any of your Meetings, and have never seen the proceedings of the last, I may, from want of information of the part I am to act, neglect some essential duty; which might not only be injurious to the Society, but mortifying to myself, as it would discover a want of knowledge, or want of attention in the President.

Humphreys and Walker have each had an ill turn since they came to this place—the latter is getting about, but the other is still in his Bed of a fever that did not till yesterday quit him for 14 or 15 days.—The danger I hope is now past, and he has only his flesh to recover, part of which, or in other words of the weight he brought with him from the scales at

West point he would readily compound for.—Mrs. Washington has also been very unwell, as most of my domesticks and Guard have been, and indeed now are —Mrs. Washington and myself are very glad to hear that Mrs. Knox and the children are well—she joins me very cordially in best wishes for them, and compliments to General and Mrs. Huntington and all our acquaintances with you.

TO SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, CHAIRMAN.

ROCKY HILL, 25 September, 1783.

SIR:

I have perused the report & Proclamation which you were pleased to put into my hands for consideration; and think an alteration in the first, and a consequent one in the other indispensably necessary;—Because, as the report now stands, it is not broad enough to comprehend the several cases which exist, for the troops of the Southern Army were forloughed by General Greene, whilst those, which lay in a manner between the two Armies were under the more immediate direction of the Secretary at War & acted upon by him.

It appears to me proper therefore to strike out the latter part of the report & after "during the War" in the third line, to insert.—"and who by the Resolutions of Congress of the —— and of —— were entitled to Furloughs be absolutely discharged from the said service, from and after the ——— day of ——— next."

The Proclamation conforming thereto, Congress may, if they conceive there is a propriety in it [after

the necessary recitals are made] offer their thanks to the Army, *generally*, for its long & faithful services; and then add—that the further services in the field of the officers who have been deranged and retired on furlough, in consequence of the aforesaid resolutions, can now be dispensed with—That they have the permission of Congress to retire from service;—and that they are no longer liable from their present engagements to be called into command again.

I can see no greater inconvenience resulting from this measure than is to be found in many other instances arising from not making the Peace Establishment, a primary, instead of a subsequent Act, to them; for had this taken place in Time, a *system* might have been formed, & every thing relative, to that system made to accord with it—whereas the longer it is delayed the more incongruous probably, it will be, as we are by this means forming the extremities, before we have moulded the body. Consequently the body must be made to comform and grow to the limbs, not the limbs to the body, which may be found as difficult in the Political as Natural formation of things, and like unto the attempt more than probably will produce a Monster.

A Proclamation couched in some such terms as is here suggested, would I think, reduce all the General as well as other Officers except those who were retained with the three years' men and such as are immediately imployed in the Staff, wch. I think consists of only Baron de Steuben and G. Duport[ail] and would moreover I think, leave out all the Engineers for the future decision of Congress, I have, &c.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHASTELLUX.

PRINCETON, 12 October, 1783.

MY DEAR CHEVALIER,

I have not had the honor of a line from you since the 4th of March last; but I will ascribe my disappointment to any cause, rather than to a decay of your friendship.

Having the appearance, and indeed the enjoyment of peace, without a final declaration of it, I, who am only waiting for the ceremonials, or till the British forces shall have taken leave of New York, am placed in an awkward and disagreeable situation, it being my anxious desire to quit the walks of public life, and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig free to seek those enjoyments and that relaxation, which a mind, that has been constantly upon the stretch for more than eight years, stands so much in need of.

I have fixed this epoch to the arrival of the definitive treaty, or to the evacuation of my country by our newly acquired friends. In the mean while, at the request of Congress I spend my time with them at this place, where they came in consequence of the riots at Philadelpia, of which you have doubtless (for it is not a very recent transaction) been fully apprized. They have lately determined to make choice of some convenient spot near the Falls of the Delaware for the permanent residence of the sovereign power of these United States; but where they will hold their sessions till they can be properly established at that place, is yet undecided.

I have lately made a tour through the Lakes George and Champlain, as far as Crown Point. Then re-

turning to Schenectady, I proceeded up the Mohawk River to Fort Schuyler (formerly Fort Stanwix), and crossed over to the Wood Creek, which empties into the Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. I then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, and viewed the Lake Otsego, and the portage between that Lake and the Mohawk River at Canajoharie. Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more contemplative and extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States, from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense diffusion and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence, which has dealt her favors to us with so profuse a hand. Would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them. I shall not rest contented, till I have explored the western country, and traversed those lines, or great part of them, which have given bounds to a new empire.[1] But when it may, if it ever shall, happen, I dare not say, as my first attention must be given to the deranged situation of my private concerns, which are not a little injured by almost nine years' absence and total disregard of them. With every wish for your health and happiness, and with the most sincere and affectionate regard, I am, my dear Chevalier, &c.

[1] "I have it in contemplation to make a tour thro' all the Eastern States, thence into Canada, thence up the St. Laurence and thro' the lakes to Detroit, thence to Lake Michigan by land or water, thence through the Western Country, by the river Illinois to the river Mississippi, and down the same to New Orleans, thence into Georgia by the way of Pensacola, and then thro' the two Carolinas home. A great tour this, you will say. Probably it may take place nowhere but in imagination, tho' it is my *wish* to begin it in the latter end of April of next year."—*Washington to the Marquis de Lafayette*, 12 October, 1783.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

ROCKY HILL, 16 October, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

Major Shaw not returning so soon as I imagined, and the subject of your Letter of the 28 September not admitting much delay, I take the opportunity of the Post to reply to it.

On referring to the Institution of the Society of the Cincinnati I find that the Chevalier de la Luzerne, the Sieur Gérard, the Counts D'Estaing, Barras and De Grasse, the Chevalier Destouches and the Count de Rochambeau with the Generals and Colonels of his Army are to be presented with the Order of the Society.

As it is however proper that these Gentlemen should be made acquainted with the nature of the Society, I propose to write to each of those above named (except the Chevalier de la Luzerne who was written to in first instance) and inclose them a copy of the Institution, at the same time informing them that Major L'Enfant is charged with the execution of the Order, and has directions to furnish them from the first that are finished.

I propose also to inclose a Copy to the Marquis de la Fayette, and request him to take the signatures of such of the French officers in our service who are entitled and wish to become members—to receive their month's pay and deliver them the Orders on their paying for them.

These Letters Major L'Enfant will carry with him and deliver to each of those Gentlemen and must be

directed to deliver them the Orders so soon as they are compleat—delivering to Count Rochambeau, for the Officers of his Command who will receive them of him—and to the Marquis de la Fayette, sufficient for the French Officers in our Service who become Members.

I enclose to you the permission for Major L'Enfant to go to France, and a Certificate of his being a Member of the Society. However, before he sets off, I think it should be well explained and understood by him, that the Voyage is not undertaken for the Society but that their business is committted to him only in consequence of his going there on his own affairs, and consequently he is not to be paid any Expence of the Voyage or his stay—but only such extra Expence as might be incurred by any person residing in France who transacted the same business for the society—These are my sentiments—if they accord with yours and the rest of the Gentlemen, and he accepts these conditions I think the sooner he sets out the better.

I will be obliged to you to make out his instructions comprehending the objects I have mentioned above and such other as you may think necessary—and to make the necessary arrangements with him respecting the funds to be furnished. I am told subscriptions have been paid in by those who wish to have Orders —I propose taking seven, for which the Money is ready at any time—and it may not be amiss in this place to inform you that it has always been my intention to present the Society with 500 Dollars—if any

part of this is necessary and can be applied with propriety in this business—I have no objection.

Maj. L'Enfant might also be directed to receive from the Marquis the Month's pay of the french Officers in our service who become Members.

I must request you to procure Six or seven Copies of the Institution to be made out neatly, to transmit to the Gentlemen above mentioned. Major L'Enfant can bring them on with him.[1]

I intend immediately to write to the Commanding Officer of each of the State Lines, who have not yet made known their intentions respecting the formation of their State Societies pressing them to a determination, for as I wish to adapt the place of the General Meeting to the convenience of all 'till I know which of the States form the Society I cannot fix it.

With great regard—

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

DEAR SIR, ROCKY HILL, 23d Octr., 1783

The arrival of the Definitive Treaty and the evacuation of New York—have been so long delayed as to interfere very materially with our arrangements for the Celebration of Peace; at this Season no use can

[1] "All the officers who chose to make use of Major L'Enfant's agency to obtain the badge of the society, not only commissioned him to bring them from France, but furnished him with the means. I did this myself for six or eight. He brought many more, I have some reason to believe on a speculating scheme, and demanded so much for them as, if my memory serves me, to disgust many members of the society, and induce them to apply to an artist in Philadelphia, who, it was said, would not only execute them as well (and without the defect which was discovered in the French ones), but furnish them cheaper."—*Washington to Knox*, 1 June, 1786.

be made of the Bower, the only possible means of accommodation, besides, the dissolution of the Army at so short a period totally defeats the object in view, for if we were even determined not to wait the events on which the Celebration has hitherto depended, it would now be impossible either to make the necessary preparations or to give timely notice to the Officers, before the Army would be dissolved. I think therefore that it will be best to defer it until the British leave the City, and then to have it at that place, where all who chuse to attend can find accommodation.

Sir Guy Carleton some time since informed me, thro' Mr. Parker, that he should leave New York in all next Month, probably by the 20th, and that when the Transports which were gone to Nova Scotia returned, he should be able to fix the day;—this notice may be short, and as it is best to be prepared, I wish you to confer on the subject with Governor Clinton, and have every necessary Arrangement made for taking possession of the city immediately on their leaving it; you will please to report to me the arrangements you may agree on.

. Inclosed I transmit you Copy of a Proclamation of Congress for the dissolution of the Army, you will please to publish it to the Troops under your Orders. * * *

P. S. Since I wrote the foregoing I have reced. a Letter from Governor Clinton in which he mentions his wish that the Troops who move down, may be put under his direction, which I think very proper so long as they remain in or near the city.

FAREWELL ORDERS TO THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

ROCKY HILL, NEAR PRINCETON,
[Sunday] 2 November 1783.

The United States in Congress assembled, after giving the most honorable testimony to the merits of the federal armies, and presenting them with the thanks of their country for their long, eminent and faithful services, having thought proper, by their proclamation bearing date the 18th day of October last, to discharge such part of the troops as were engaged for the war, and to permit the officers on furlough to retire from service from and after to-morrow; which proclamation having been communicated in the public papers for the information and government of all concerned, it only remains for the Commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States (however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be), and to bid them an affectionate, a long farewell.

But before the Commander-in-chief takes his final leave of those he holds most dear, he wishes to indulge himself a few moments in calling to mind a slight review of the past. He will then take the liberty of exploring with his military friends their future prospects, of advising the general line of conduct, which, in his opinion, ought to be pursued; and he will conclude the address by expressing the obligations he feels himself under for the spirited and able assistance he has experienced from them, in the performance of an arduous office.

A contemplation of the complete attainment (at a period earlier than could have been expected) of the object, for which we contended against so formidable a power, cannot but inspire us with astonishment and gratitude. The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such, as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving; while the unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle.

It is not the meaning nor within the compass of this address, to detail the hardships peculiarly incident to our service, or to describe the distresses, which in several instances have resulted from the extremes of hunger and nakedness, combined with the rigors of an inclement season; nor is it necessary to dwell on the dark side of our past affairs. Every American officer and soldier must now console himself for any unpleasant circumstances, which may have occurred, by a recollection of the uncommon scenes in which he has been called to act no inglorious part, and the astonishing events of which he has been a witness; events which have seldom, if ever before, taken place on the stage of human action; nor can they probably ever happen again. For who has before seen a disciplined army formed at once from such raw materials? Who, that was not a witness, could imagine, that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon; and that men, who came from the different parts of the continent, strongly disposed by the habits of education to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of brothers? Or who, that was not on the spot, can trace the steps by which such a wonderful revolution has been effected, and such a glorious period put to all our warlike toils?

It is universally acknowledged, that the enlarged prospects of happiness, opened by the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, almost exceeds the power of description. And shall not the brave men, who have contributed so essentially to these inestimable acquisitions, retiring victorious from the field of war to the field of agriculture, participate in all the blessings, which have been obtained? In such a republic, who will exclude them from the rights of citizens, and the fruits of their labors? In such a country, so happily circumstanced, the pursuits of commerce and the cultivation of the soil will unfold to industry the certain road to competence. To those hardy soldiers, who are actuated by the spirit of adventure, the fisheries will afford ample and profitable employment; and the extensive and fertile regions of the West will yield a most happy asylum to those, who, fond of domestic enjoyment, are seeking for personal independence. Nor is it possible to conceive, that any one of the United States will prefer a national bankruptcy, and a dissolution of the Union,

to a compliance with the requisitions of Congress, and the payment of its just debts; so that the officers and soldiers may expect considerable assistance, in recommencing their civil occupations, from the sums due to them from the public, which must and will most inevitably be paid.

In order to effect this desirable purpose, and to remove the prejudices, which may have taken posession of the minds of any of the good people of the States, it is earnestly recommended to all the troops, that, with strong attachments to the Union, they should carry with them into civil society the most conciliating dispositions, and that they should prove themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they have been persevering and victorious as soldiers. What though there should be some envious individuals, who are unwilling to pay the debt the public has contracted, or to yield the tribute due to merit; yet let such unworthy treatment produce no invective, or any instance of intemperate conduct. Let it be remembered, that the unbiassed voice of the free citizens of the United States has promised the just reward and given the merited applause. Let it be known and remembered, that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence; and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still incite the men, who composed them, to honorable actions; under the persuasion that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field. Every one may rest assured, that much, very much, of the future happiness of the officers and men, will depend upon the wise and manly conduct, which shall be adopted by them when they are mingled with the great body of the community. And, although the General has so frequently given it as his opinion in the most public and explicit manner, that, unless the principles of the Federal Government were properly supported, and the powers of the Union increased, the honor, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost forever; yet he cannot help repeating, on this occasion, so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every officer and every soldier, who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add his best

endeavors to those of his worthy fellow citizens towards effecting these great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends.

The Commander-in-chief conceives little is now wanting, to enable the soldier, to change the military character into that of the citizen, but that steady and decent tenor of behavior, which has generally distinguished, not only the army under his immediate command, but the different detachments and separate armies, through the course of the war. From their good sense and prudence he anticipates the happiest consequences; and, while he congratulates them on the glorious occasion, which renders their services in the field no longer necessary, he wishes to express the strong obligations he feels himself under for the assistance he has received from every class and in every instance. He presents his thanks in the most serious and affectionate manner to the general officers, as well for their counsel on many interesting occasions, as for their ardor in promoting the success of the plans he had adopted; to the commandants of regiments and corps, and to the other officers, for their great zeal and attention in carrying his orders promptly into execution; to the staff, for their alacrity and exactness in performing the duties of their several departments; and to the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers, for their extraordinary patience and suffering, as well as their invincible fortitude in action. To the various branches of the army, the General takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his inviolable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power; that he were really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done.

And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommemdations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend

those, who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes and this benediction, the Commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed for ever.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WEST POINT, 18 November, 1783.

Sir,

I have at length the pleasure to inform your Excellency and Congress, that Sir Guy Carleton has fixed upon the time at which he proposes to evacuate the city of New York. The particulars are more fully explained in his letter of the 12th instant,[1] a copy of which, together with my answer, is enclosed.

I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] Since Carleton's letter to Congress of August 17th nothing further was determined on the time when the city would be turned over to the Americans. November 6th Washington pointedly asked the British Commander when he expected to embark, and received a reply that the troops would be withdrawn before the end of the month. "At all events, I propose to relinquish the posts at Kingsbridge, and as far as McGowans Pass inclusive on this Island, on the 21st instant; to resign the possession of Herrick's and Hamptead, with all to the eastward on Long Island, on the same day; and if possible, to give this city with Brooklyn, on the day following; and Paulus Hook, Dennis's, and Staten Island, as soon after as may be practicable."

Washington had a conference with Governor Clinton on the 14th, and the latter issued a proclamation, dated the 15th of November, giving notice of the day appointed by Sir Guy Carleton for evacuating the city, and summoning the several members of the council of New York to convene at East Chester, on the 21st, with a view of immediately establishing civil government in the districts of the State hitherto occupied by the British troops; and at the same time enjoining and requiring the inhabitants of such parts to yield due obedience to the laws of the State, and to be vigilant in preserving the public peace and good order.

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

SIR, HAERLEM, 22 November, 1783.

I have been honored with your Excellency's letter of the 19th instant; and for a reply to the proposition contained in it, I must beg leave to refer you to his Excellency Governor Clinton, who will inform you by this conveyance, that the council instituted for the temporary government of the State So. District have acceded to your reservations, in full confidence that the embarkation will be expedited as much as the circumstances will admit.[1]

With regard to the information, that a deliberate combination has been formed to plunder the city of New York, I have to observe, that the intelligence appears to me not to be well-founded; at least, no intimations of the kind had ever before come to my knowledge; and I can assure your Excellency, that such arrangements have been made, as will, in my opinion, not only utterly discountenance, but effectually prevent, any outrage or disorder, unless the evacuation should be delayed until a much larger number of people shall be collected from the country, than have been assembled as yet for the purpose of going into town on its being relinquished by your troops; in which case the difficulty of establishing civil government and maintaining good order may be greatly increased.

[1] "If I have proper assurances that we shall retain a free and uninterrupted use of the ship yard and Hallett's wharf in New York and the Brewery and Bake House on Long Island (which the admiral represents as indispensably necessary for the shipping and sick seamen), until we can be ready to take our final departure, I shall retire from this city and from Brooklyn on Tuesday next at noon, or as soon after as wind and weather may permit."—*Carleton to Washington*, 19 November, 1783.

Lieutenant-Colonel Walker will have the honor to deliver this letter to your Excellency, and to assure you of the respectful consideration with which

I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO JAMES McHENRY.

DEAR SIR: PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 10th, 1783.

After seeing the backs of the British Forces turned upon us, and the Executive of the State of New York put into peaceable possession of their Capitol, I set out for this place. On Monday next I expect to leave the city, and by slow traveling arrive at Baltimore on Wednesday, where I will spend one day and then proceed to Annapolis and get translated into a private Citizen. I am your &c.[2]

[1] The evacuation was postponed for two days by bad weather, but on the morning of the 25th of November, the troops, who had come down from West Point, marched from Haerlem to the Bowery, in the upper part of the city of New York. Here they remained till about one o'clock, when the British troops left the posts in that quarter, and the American troops immediately marched into the city. Washington and Clinton followed, escorted by the civil officers of the States and many citizens. In the evening the Governor gave a public dinner at Fraunces' Tavern, at which Washington and his general officers were present. An account of the evacuation, with the addresses and replies, may be found in the *Manual of the Corporation of the City of New York*, 1870. On December 2d Washington sincerely wished Sir Guy and his troops a "safe and pleasant passage."

An affecting account of the manner in which he took leave of the officers, who had so long been his associates in arms, is contained in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. iv., p. 619. In all the principal towns through which he passed, on his way to Annapolis, where Congress was assembling, he was met with the congratulations of his fellow-citizens, and addresses were presented to him by many public bodies, including the legislatures of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland; the American Philosophical Society, and the University of Pennsylvania; the citizens of towns in their corporate capacity, religious societies, and various incorporated associations.

[2] Mr. J. W. M. Lee, of the Maryland Historical Society, gave me this from a printed copy, in a sale of autographs from the McHenry papers, at Baltimore, December, 1859, where the letter brought $21. It was printed in the *Historical*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, ANNAPOLIS, 20 December, 1783.

I take the earliest opportunity to inform Congress of my arrival in this city, with the intention of asking leave to resign the commission I have the honor of holding in their service. It is essential for me to know their pleasure, and in what manner it will be most proper to offer my resignation, whether in writing, or at an audience. I shall therefore request to be honored with the necessary information, that, being apprized of the sentiments of Congress, I may regulate my conduct accordingly. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

Magazine, xii., 361, and in the *Magazine of American History*, v., 129, but in the latter case it was not known to whom the letter was written.

[1] A committee, composed of Jefferson, Gerry, and McHenry, prepared the following report, which was adopted by Congress:

"Resolved That the order for the public audience of General Washington be as follows:

"1. The President and members are to be seated and covered and the Secy. to be standing by the side of the president.

"2. The arrival of the general is to be announced by the Messenger to the Secy.—who is thereupon to introduce the general attended by his Aids to the hall of Congress.

"3. The general being conducted to a chair by the Secy. is to be seated with an Aid on each side standing and the Secy. is to resume his place.

"4. After a proper time for the arrangement of spectators silence is to be ordered by the Secy.—if necessary and the president is to address the general in the following words:

"'Sir, The United States in Congress assembled are prepared to receive your communications.'

"Where upon the general is to arise and address Congress, after which he is to deliver his Commission and a copy of his address to the president.

"5. The general having resumed his place the President is to deliver the answer of Congress which the general is to receive standing.

"6. The President having finished, the Secy. is to deliver the general a copy of the answer and the general is then to take his leave.

"When the general rises to make his address and also when he retires he is to bow to Congress, which they are to return by uncovering without bowing. 22 December, 1783."

TO BARON STEUBEN.

MY DEAR BARON, ANNAPOLIS, 23 December, 1783.

Although I have taken frequent opportunities, both in public and private, of acknowledging your great zeal, attention, and abilities, in performing the duties of your office; yet I wish to make use of this last moment of my public life to signify, in the strongest terms, my entire approbation of your conduct, and to express my sense of the obligations the public is under to you, for your faithful and meritorious services.

I beg you will be convinced, my dear Sir, that I should rejoice if it could ever be in my power to serve you more essentially, than by expressions of regard and affection; but, in the mean time, I am persuaded you will not be displeased with this farewell token of my sincere friendship and esteem for you.

This is the last letter I shall write, while I continue in the service of my country. The hour of my resignation is fixed at twelve to day; after which, I shall become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, where I shall be glad to embrace you, and testify the great esteem and consideration with which I am, my dear Baron, &c.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS ON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION.[1]

ANNAPOLIS, 23 December, 1783.

MR. PRESIDENT,

The great events, on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honor of offering my sincere

[1] The original of this address is in the Maryland Historical Society, as one of the McHenry MSS. Mr. Lee, the librarian, says it is all in Washington's writing, and he has noted for me some alterations which are not without interest.

congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring[1] from the Service of my Country.

Happy in the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation,[2] I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme Power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my Countrymen, encreases with every review of the momentous contest.

While I repeat my obligations to the Army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the Gentlemen, who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible that the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, Sir, to recommend in particular those, who have continued in Service to the present moment, as worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress.

I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the Interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence[3] of them to his holy keeping.

Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate[4] farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my[5] leave of all the employments of public life.[6]

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[1] "request permission to retire."

[2] "as well as in the contemplation of our prospects of national happiness."

[3] "direction." [4] "and final." [5] "ultimate leave."

[6] "If my commission is not necessary for the files of Congress, I should be glad to have it deposited among my own papers. It may serve *my grand-*

TO JONATHAN TRUMBULL, JUNIOR.

MOUNT VERNON, 5 January, 1784.[1]

DEAR TRUMBULL,

Your obliging letter of the 15th of November did not reach me until some days after we had taken possession of the city of New York. The scene, that followed, of festivity, congratulation, addresses, and resignation, must be my apology for not replying to it sooner.

I sincerely thank you for the copy of the address of Governor Trumbull to the General Assembly and freemen of your State.[2] The sentiments contained in it are such, as would do honor to a patriot of any age or nation; at least they are too coincident with my own, not to meet with my warmest approbation. Be so good as to present my most cordial respects to

children, some fifty or an hundred years hence, for a theme to ruminate upon, if *they* should be contemplatively disposed."—*Washington to Charles Thomson*, 22 January, 1784.

From Mr. Thomson's Reply.—"With respect to your *commission*, I have to inform you, that, previous to the receipt of your letter, it had been in agitation among the members to have an order passed for returning it to you in a gold box. A motion has accordingly been made to that effect, which was received with general approbation, and referred to a committee to be drawn up in proper terms. The committee have not yet reported. But I have not the least doubt of its being returned to you in a way, that will be satisfactory; and I heartily wish, that this sacred deposit may be preserved by your *children* and children's children to the latest posterity, and may prove an incentive to them to emulate the virtues of their worthy and great progenitor."—Annapolis, February 7th.

This intention it seems was never fulfilled. The original commission was retained, and is deposited in the Department of State of the United States.

[1] Washington arrived at Mount Vernon on the day before Christmas.

[2] An address of Governor Trumbull to the Assembly of Connecticut, in October, 1783, declining a re-election. He was then in the seventy-third year of his age, and had been governor of Connecticut fourteen years.

the Governor, and let him know, that it is my wish, the mutual friendship and esteem, which have been planted and fostered in the tumult of public life, may not wither and die in the serenity of retirement. Tell him, we should rather amuse our evening hours of life in cultivating the tender plants, and bringing them to perfection, before they are transplanted to a happier clime.

Notwithstanding the jealous and contracted temper, which seems to prevail in some of the States, yet I cannot but hope and believe, that the good sense of the people will ultimately get the better of their prejudices; and that order and sound policy, though they do not come so soon as one would wish, will be produced from the present unsettled and deranged state of public affairs. Indeed, I am happy to observe, that the political disposition is actually meliorating every day. Several of the States have manifested an inclination to invest Congress with more ample powers; most of the legislatures appear disposed to do perfect justice; and the Assembly of this commonwealth have just complied with the requisitions of Congress, and I am informed, without a dissentent voice. Every thing, my dear Trumbull, will come right at last, as we have often prophesied. My only fear is, that we shall lose a little reputation first.[1]

[1] Some parts of Governor Trumbull's address had not been acceptable to the majority of the legislature. He had spoken of the necessity of enlarging the powers of Congress, and of strengthening the arm of government. The following is a paragraph of the reply reported by a committee of the General Assembly, which was rejected by the lower house:

"That the secretary request of his Excellency a copy of his address, that it may be published, which this Assembly are especially desirous of, as they con-

After having passed, with as much prosperity as could be expected, through the career of public life, I have now reached the goal of domestic enjoyment; in which state, I assure you I find your good wishes most acceptable to me. The family at Mount Vernon joins in the same compliments and cordiality, with which I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 14 January, 1784.

SIR,

I have had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 28th ultimo by Mr. Godin, and beg your Excellency to be persuaded, that I shall always be happy in opportunities of showing every suitable attention to foreigners and gentlemen of such distinction, as those you did me the honor to introduce to my acquaintance.

I am truly sensible, Sir, that the extract from the instructions of the executive of Pennsylvania to their

sider those important principles of justice, benevolence, and subordination to law, therein inculcated, as constituting the only solid basis upon which social happiness can be established, and therefore deserving the serious attention of the good people of the State."

Upon this paragraph Mr. Trumbull remarked in his letter to General Washington: "It was rejected, lest, by adopting it, they should seem to convey to the people an idea of their concurring with the political sentiments contained in the address; so exceedingly jealous is the spirit of this State at present respecting the powers and the engagements of Congress, arising principally from their aversion to the half-pay and commutation granted to the army; principally I say arising from this cause. It is but too true, that some few are wicked enough to hope, that, by means of this clamor, they may be able to rid themselves of the whole public debt, by introducing so much confusion into public measures, as shall eventually produce a general abolition of the whole."—*MS. Letter*, November 15, 1783.

delegates contains another most flattering proof of the favorable opinion they are pleased to entertain of my past services. Every repeated mark of the approbation of my fellow citizens, (especially of those invested with so dignified an appointment,) demands my particular acknowledgment. Under this impression, I cannot but feel the greatest obligations to the Supreme Executive Council of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. But, as my sentiments on the subject of their instructions have been long and well known to the public, I need not repeat them to your Excellency on the present occasion.[1] * * *

[1] The instructions of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania to the delegates in Congress from that State contained the following clause:

"Though his Excellency General Washington proposes in a short time to retire, yet his illustrious actions and virtues render his character so splendid and venerable, that, it is highly probable, the admiration and esteem of the world may make his life in a very considerable degree public, as numbers will be desirous of seeing the great and good man, who has so eminently contributed to the happiness of a nation. His very services to his country may therefore subject him to expenses, unless he permits her gratitude to interpose.

"We are perfectly acquainted with the disinterestedness and generosity of his soul. He thinks himself amply *rewarded* for all his labors and cares, by the love and prosperity of his fellow citizens. It is true, no rewards they can bestow can be equal to his merits. But they ought not to suffer those merits to be burthensome to him. We are convinced that the people of Pennsylvania would regret such a consequence.

"We are aware of the delicacy, with which this subject must be treated. But relying upon the good sense of Congress, we wish it may engage their early attention."—December 16, 1783.

As one of the delegates of Pennsylvania, President Mifflin forwarded this paper to General Washington. The brief reply in the above letter prevented its being laid before Congress. That reply, indeed, was accordant with his principles and determination, made known when he received his commission in the army. It was then his fixed purpose to receive no compensation from his country for his services. To his resolution he rigidly adhered, never exhibiting any other claims, than the simple amount of his expenses while he held his commission and was in actual employment.—*Sparks.*

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

MY DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 18 January, 1784.[1]

I have just had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 8th. For the friendly and affectionate terms, in which you have welcomed my return to this country and to private life, and for the favorable light in which you are pleased to consider and express your sense of my past services, you have my warmest and most grateful acknowledgments.

That the prospect before us is, as you justly observe, fair, none can deny; but what use we shall make of it is exceedingly problematical; not but that I believe all things will come right at last, but like a young heir, come a little prematurely to a large inheritance, we shall wanton and run riot until we have brought our reputation to the brink of ruin, and then like him shall have to labor with the current of opinion, when *compelled* perhaps to do what prudence and common policy pointed out, as plain as any problem in Euclid, in the first instance.

note

[1] Washington had no sooner reached Mount Vernon than he was overwhelmed by applications from many sources for his aid and countenance. The manner in which the army had been disbanded appealed to his sympathies, and he was ever ready to listen to the application of those who had served under him, and with whose services and wants he was acquainted. In this much tact and discrimination were necessary. He was now a private citizen, without call upon either Congress, or the States, and ostensibly of no weight in determining public questions or urging private claims. Yet he would have had no time for other occupation had he attempted to do what was asked of him. In addition to his friendly correspondence—a heavy tax on his time and strength, he was asked to write endorsements and recommendations, stand sponsor to books on every topic, subscribe money to all manner of undertakings, and loan it to the needy. I could fill two volumes with his replies, but have been compelled to omit many that Mr. Sparks printed in his collection, for the form, always in good taste and discretion, was somewhat stereotyped; and I thought, with so many other letters of interest, I could best sacrifice many of this description.

The disinclination of the individual States to yield competent powers to Congress for the federal government, their unreasonable jealousy of that body and of one another, and the disposition, which seems to pervade each, of being all-wise and all-powerful within itself, will, if there is not a change in the system, be our downfall as a nation. This is as clear to me as the A, B, C; and I think we have opposed Great Britain, and have arrived at the present state of peace and independency, to very little purpose, if we cannot conquer our own prejudices. The powers of Europe begin to see this, and our newly acquired friends, the British, are already and professedly acting upon this ground; and wisely too, if we are determined to persevere in our folly. They know that individual opposition to their measures is futile, and boast that we are not sufficiently united as a nation to give a general one! Is not the indignity alone of this declaration, while we are in the very act of peace-making and conciliation, sufficient to stimulate us to vest more extensive and adequate powers in the sovereign of these United States?

For my own part, although I am returned to, and am now mingled with, the class of private citizens, and like them must suffer all the evils of a tyranny, or of too great an extension of federal powers, I have no fears arising from this source, in my mind; but I have many, and powerful ones indeed, which predict the worst consequences, from a half-starved, limping government, that appears to be always moving upon crutches, and tottering at every step. Men chosen as the delegates in Congress are, cannot officially be

dangerous. They depend upon the breath, nay, they are so much the creatures of the people, under the present constitution, that they can have no views, (which could possibly be carried into execution,) nor any interests distinct from those of their constituents. My political creed, therefore, is, to be wise in the choice of delegates, support them like gentlemen while they are our representatives, give them competent powers for all federal purposes, support them in the due exercise thereof, and, lastly, to compel them to close attendance in Congress during their delegation. These things, under the present mode for and termination of elections, aided by annual instead of constant sessions, would, or I am exceedingly mistaken, make us one of the most wealthy, happy, respectable, and powerful nations, that ever inhabited the terrestrial globe. Without them, we shall, in my opinion, soon be every thing which is the direct reverse of them.

I shall look for you, in the first part of next month, with such other friends as may incline to accompany you, with great pleasure, being, with best respects to Mrs. Harrison, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

MOUNT VERNON, 1 February, 1784.

At length, my dear Marquis, I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac; and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, free from

the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all, and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order for my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers.

Except an introductory letter or two, and one countermanding my request respecting plate, I have not written to you since the middle of October by General Duportail. To inform you, at this late hour, that the city of New York was evacuated by the British forces on the 25th of November; that the American troops took possession of it the same day, and delivered it over to the civil authority of the State; that good order, contrary to the expectation and predictions of General Carleton, his officers, and all the loyalists, was immediately established; and that the harbor of New York was finally cleared of the British flag about the 5th or 6th of December, would be an insult to your intelligence. And that I remained

eight days in New York after we took possession of the city; that I was very much hurried during that time, which was the reason I did not write to you from thence; that, taking Philadelphia in my way, I was obliged to remain there a week; that at Annapolis, where Congress were then and are now sitting, I did, on the 23d of December present them my commission, and made them my last bow, and on the eve of Christmas entered these doors an older man by near nine years than when I left them, is very uninteresting to any but myself. Since that period, we have been fast locked up in frost and snow, and excluded in a manner from all kinds of intercourse, the winter having been, and still continues to be, extremely severe.

I have now to acknowledge and thank you for your favors of the 22d of July and 8th of September, both of which, although the first is of old date, have come to hand since my letter to you of October. The accounts contained therein of the political and commercial state of affairs, as they respect America, are interesting, and I wish I could add, that they were altogether satisfactory; and the agency you have had in both, particularly with regard to the free ports in France, is a fresh evidence of your unwearied endeavors to serve this country; but there is no part of your letters to Congress, my dear Marquis, which bespeaks the excellence of your heart more plainly, than that which contains those noble and generous sentiments on the justice which is due to the faithful friends and servants of the public. But I must do Congress the

justice to declare, that, as a body, I believe there is every disposition in them, not only to acknowledge the merits, but to reward the services of the army. There is a contractedness, I am sorry to add, in some of the States, from whence all our difficulties on this head proceed; but it is to be hoped, that the good sense and perseverance of the rest will ultimately prevail, as the spirit of *meanness* is beginning to subside.

From a letter, which I have just received from the governor of this State, I expect him here in a few days, when I shall not be unmindful of what you have written about the bust, and will endeavor to have matters respecting it placed on their proper basis. I thank you most sincerely, my dear Marquis, for your kind invitation to your house, if I should come to Paris. At present I see but little prospect of such a voyage. The deranged situation of my private concerns, occasioned by an absence of almost nine years, and an entire disregard of all private business during that period, will not only suspend, but may put it for ever out of my power to gratify this wish. This not being the case with you, come with Madame de Lafayette, and view me in my domestic walks. I have often told you, and repeat it again, that no man could receive you in them with more friendship and affection than I should do; in which I am sure Mrs. Washington would cordially join me. We unite in respectful compliments to your lady, and best wishes for your little flock. With every sentiment of esteem, admiration, and love, I am, my dear Marquis, your most affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS LEWIS.[1]

MOUNT VERNON, 1 February, 1784.

Sir,

After an absence of almost nine years, and *nearly* a total suspension of all my private concerns, I am at length set down at home, and am endeavoring to recover my business from the confusion into which it has run during that period.

Among other matters which require my attention, indeed in which I need information, is the state of the Lands which I am entitled to in my own right, and by purchase, under the royal Proclamation in 1763, (west of the mountains). My papers are so mixed, and in such disorder at this time, occasioned by frequent hasty removals of them out of the way of the Enemy, that I cannot, (it being likely too, that some of them are lost,) by the assistance of my memory, come at a thorough knowledge of that business. In a Letter which I have come across, from Capt. William Crawford, who appears to have acted as your deputy, dated the 8th of May 1774, I find these words—"Inclosed you have the Drafts of the round Bottom and your Shurtee's Land done agreeably to Mr. Lewis's direction." For the latter, I have found a patent signed by Lord Dunmore, the 5th day of July 1774, for 2813 acres; but the other is not in my possession, and I am unable from any recollection I have of the matter, to account for it, unless it should have been arrested there by some very ungenerous, and unjustifiable attempts of different people, at different times, to

[1] Surveyor of Augusta.

disturb me in my right to it—a right, I will venture to say, which is founded upon the first discovery of the Land, the first improvement of it, the first survey, and, for ought I know, the *only* report by authority that ever was made of it; which will be found in the words of the enclosed copy, the recital of which, if I mistake not is in your own hand writing, and the whole with your signature.

I have an imperfect recollection that in the year 1774, I sent a young man (of the name of Young, who at that time lived with me) to you on the business of these Lands; but not having as yet met with any letter from you, or report from him on the subject, I am unable with precision, to recollect the particular matters with which he was charged, or the result of his journey. This then is one of the points on which I want information, and it is one of the inducements to my giving you the trouble of this letter.

Another is, to know if I have any warrants in your hands unexecuted, it appearing from two bonds in my possession, one from a Capt. Roots,[1] for 3000 acres; the other from Lieut: (now, or lately the Revd. Mr.) Thruston for 2000 more; that I ought (if I have not been neglectful in taking them out) to have warrants somewhere for 5000 acres under the proclamation of 1763,—of which no locations, that have come to my knowledge have yet been made.

Another thing of which I wish to be informed is, whether there are any surveys or locations in your Office, for the Land immediately at the point of fork

[1] Captain John Roots.

between the little Kanhawa (upper side) and the Ohio, and in that case, in whose names they are made. The reason for the latter enquiry is, that Capt. Crawford, in a letter of the 12th of Nov. 1773, (an extract from which I herewith enclose, as I also do a copy of the survey, which he actually made at that place,) proposed to locate this spot for his own benefit and mine. And I am the more sollicitous in this enquiry, as it appears by a subsequent Letter of his to me, that there was some difficulty in the way of his obtaining a warrant from Lord Dunmore for the part he expected to get himself. If this difficulty continued to exist until his death, so as to prevent his location; and provided there are no better pretensions than mine; I should be glad to lay the two warrants before mentioned (to wit, Roots's and Thruston's) on this spot. I would be understood however, explicitly to mean, that it is not my wish, in the smallest degree to injure my much regretted friend Crawford, or any person claiming under him by this application; but if the road is open, to learn only from you, by what mode I am to obtain it; having the above rights for 5000 acres, which were in whole, or part, designed for this very spot, yet to locate.[1]

[1] This particular spot had been claimed by Charles Smith, Dr. Briscoe, and also by Michael Cresap, of Maryland, "who appears to have had pretensions of some kind or another to every good spot in the country."

"Having mentioned the name of Cresap, it reminds me of another matter which I must also request the favor of you to give me information upon. It is, whether, if he has had any surveys returned to the Land Office of this State, there is one for about five or six hundred acres for a tract which is well known and distinguished by the name of the Round bottom on the Ohio, opposite to Pipe Creek, and a little above a creek called Capteening? He has, I find, ar-

It might seem proper, before I conclude to make an apology for the trouble the compliance with these several requests will give you; but persuading myself you will consider the situation I have been in for many years, as a reasonable excuse; I conceive it is altogether unnecessary, my good Sir, to offer one. I shall only request the favor therefore, of an answer, and your care of the inclosed letter to your nephew, (who I find has made one survey for me in Bottetourt) or to the Surveyor of that County.

On the Death of your Brother Genl. Lewis, I most sincerely condole with you, as I had, while he was living a sincere friendship and regard for him. I am, &c.

P. S. An answer under cover to some acquaintance of yours in Fredericksg. or Richmond, with a request to put the Letter into the post office, will be certain of getting to hand—otherwise, unless an opportunity shou'd offer directly to Alexandria, the chances are against my ever receiving it.——

TO GILBERT SIMPSON.

FREDERICKSBURG, 13 February, 1784.

MR. SIMPSON,

Having closed all my transactions with the public, it now behooves me to look into my own private business, no part of which seems to call louder for atten-

rested my survey of it for 587 acres, made under all the legal forms, and upon proper warrants, for no better reason that I could ever learn, than because it was a good bottom, and convenient for him to possess it, and had it in his power to do it with impunity."—*Washington to John Harvie*, 10 February, 1784.

tion, than my concerns with you.—How profitable our partnership has been, *you best can tell;* and how advantageous my mill has been, none can tell so well as *yourself.*

If however I am to credit the report, not only of one, but every body from that country, I ought to have a good deal of wealth in your hands, arising from the produce of it; because all agree, that it is the best mill, and has had more custom than any other on the West side the Alleghaney Mountains; I expect something very handsome therefore from that quarter. I want a full settlement of this account from the beginning, clearly stated.—I also require a full and complete settlement of our Par[t]nership accounts, where in every article of debit is to be properly supported by vouchers; and the sums receivd. to be mentioned for what, and from whom they were received. In a word I expect every thing relating to the partnership, as well as my individual and separate interests, will appear clear and satisfactory. And as I expect to leave home for a pretty long trip, before or at furthest by middle of April, I think it incumbent upon you to make this settlement previous to it, especially as the world does not scruple to say that you have been much more attentive to your own interest than to mine. But I hope your accounts will give the lie to these reports, by shewing that something more than your own emolument was intended by the partnership; and that you have acted like an honest, industrious and frugal man, for the mutual interest of us both; which will justify the opinion I entertained of you at

the time of our agreement, and would be complying with the conditions and professed intention of our associating together.[1]

This Letter will be certain of getting into your hands in the course of ten or twelve days, as it goes by my nephew,[2] who I met with at this place, where I had come on a visit; and who is on his way to Fort Pitt, &c. The enclosure for Major Stephenson (Brother to the late Colo. Crawford) I wish to have put into his own hands if living; if otherwise, into the hands of Executor or administrator of Colo. Crawford; as the contents of it relate principally to some matters between that deceased Gentleman and me. I am, &c.

MEMORANDUM TO JOHN LEWIS.

14 February, 1784.

G. Washington would be obliged to Mr. Lewis for delivering, or causing to be delivered by a safe hand the Letter accompanying this, to Mr. Gilbert Simpson, & if he goes by his house to Fort Pitt;—for observing the size, & condition of his Plantation & the Condition of the Mill.—& for enquiring how many Tenants he has placed on the Land, for how long a term, & upon what Rents. Whether there is any person living upon a small Tract he holds at the Great Meadows—what sort of an Improvement is thereon—of whom the person took it and upon what terms—And should Mr. Lewis have a favorable opportunity, the General would be obliged to him for informing those settlers upon his tract West

[1] In December, 1890, a package of seventy-nine pieces of Virginia paper money, of various denominations, was sold at auction in Philadelphia, with a wrapper bearing an endorsement in Washington's writing, "Given in by Gilb. Simpson, 19 June, 1784, to G. Washington."

[2] John Lewis.

of the Monongahela, on the waters of Shurtee's & Raccoon creeks[1] that he has a patent for the Land, dated the 5th day of July 1774 —that he will most assuredly assert his right to it. But, in consideration of their having made Improvements thereon ignorantly, or under a mistaken belief, founded in false assertions that the Land did not belong to him, he is willing that they should remain upon it as Tenants, upon a just and moderate rent, such as he and they can agree upon. The like may be said to any Person or Persons who may be settled at a place called the Round Bottom, on the Ohio, opposite Pipe Creek and a little above a Creek called Capteening, which has been surveyed by the county Surveyor of Augusta upon proper warrants from Lord Dunmore, ever since the 14th day of July 1773.

If Mr. Lewis can discover by indirect means who would be a fit Agent in the neighborhood of Fort Pitt to charge with the seating and leasing the General's Lands in that country without holding up Ideas to them which may lead any one to expect the appointment, he would thank him for the information.

Such parts of these requests as can be complied with before his departure from Fort Pitt, the General would be obliged by receiving them (in a letter) from that place, as he is desirous of getting some knowledge of his affairs in that Country, as soon as possible.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

MOUNT VERNON, 20 February, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

The bad weather, and the great care which the post-riders take of themselves, prevented your letters of the 3d and 9th of last month from getting to my hands till the 10th of this. Setting off next morning for Fredericksburg to pay my duty to an aged mother,

[1] Known also as Miller's Run. It was part of 3,000 acres purchased by Washington of Posey, and was surveyed 23 March, 1771.

and not returning till yesterday, will be admitted, I hope, as a sufficient apology for my silence until now.

I am much obliged by the trouble you have taken to report the state of the garrison and stores, together with the disposition of the troops at West Point to me; and I think the allowance of rations, or subsistence money, to such officers as could not retire at that inclement season, was not only perfectly humane, but perfectly just also, and that it must appear so to Congress.

It would seem to me, without having recourse to calculation, that the allowance of a major-general in a separate department to the person who shall discharge the duties of secretary at war, master of ordnance, and commanding officer of the forces, which may be retained or raised on a peace establishment, is a very moderate demand. I expect the president and some members of Congress here in a day or two, and will tell them so.

It was among my first acts, after I got home, to write to the president of each State Society, appointing Philadelphia (and the first Monday in May) for the general meeting of the Cincinnati. Colonel Walker took all the letters to the presidents eastward of this with him before new year's day; and I despatched those for the southward, about the same time, by the post. I have even sent duplicates for fear of miscarriage; yet, though it is the most eligible method, it is to be feared it will not prove so effectual a communication, as a general notification in the public gazettes would have been. And, in case of failure, I shall be

exceedingly sorry for not having adopted the most certain, as it would give me pleasure to find the first general meeting a very full one. I have named Philadelphia (contrary to my own judgment, as it is not central), to comply with the wishes of South Carolina; which, being the most southern State, has desired it.[1] North Carolina I have not heard a tittle from, nor any thing official from New Hampshire. All the other States have acceded very unanimously to the proposition, which was sent from the army.

I am just beginning to experience that ease and freedom from public cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realize; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not till lately I could get the better of my usual custon of ruminating, as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had any thing to do with public transactions.

I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed; and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling.

[1] That is, the most southern State from which delegates would go to attend the meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati.

I shall be very happy, and I hope I shall not be disappointed, in seeing you at the proposed meeting in Philadelphia. The friendship I have conceived for you will not be impaired by absence, but it may be no unpleasing circumstance to brighten the chain by a renewal of the covenant. My best wishes attend Mrs. Knox and the little folks, in which Mrs. Washington most heartily joins me. With sentiments of the purest esteem, regard, and affection, I am, &c.

P. S. I hope General Greene will be in the delegation from Rhode Island, and that we shall see him at the general meeting of the Cincinnati. Will you intimate this to him?

TO DOLPHIN DREW.

MOUNT VERNON, 25 February, 1784.

SIR,

Yesterday evening brought me your favor of the 13th——

Two things induced me to Lease my Lands in small tenements; the first was to accommodate weak handed people who were not able to purchase, thereby inviting and encouraging a number of useful Husbandmen and Mechanicks to settle among us: The other, that I might have them restored to me at the expiration of the term for which they were granted, in good order and well improved. One step towards which was to prevent a shift of property without my consent, and a covenant was inserted in the Leases accordingly.

From the first I laid it down as a maxim, that no person who possessed Lands adjoining, should hold

any of mine as a Lease, and for this obvious reason, that the weight of their labors, and burden of the crops, whilst it was in a condition to bear them, would fall upon my Land, and the improvement upon his own, in spite of all the covenants which could be inserted to prevent it. Having no cause to depart from this opinion, and without meaning to apply the obsertion particularly to Mr. Throckmorton, whose person and character are entirely unknown to me, he must excuse me for declaring in very explicit terms, that I will not suffer his purchase of Collet, to be carried into effect. Of this, Mr. Lund Washington, who was acquainted with my sentiments on all these matters, and who superintended my business, informed me he acquainted Mr. Throckmorton (hearing he was about to purchase,) either directly or by means of his acquaintance in September last :—he has not paid his money therefore, or erred in this business, without warning of the consequences.

A good price and ready Money might induce me to part with the fee-simple of Collet's Lot—perhaps of the other also. Without these I do not incline to sell, as Lands are rising very fast in their price ; which will be enhanced by the emigration of Foreigners, and the demand for them. I am, &c.

TO CAPTAIN FIELDING LEWIS.

DEAR FIELDG., MOUNT VERNON, 27 February, 1784.

You very much mistake my circumstances when you suppose me in a condition to advance money. I made no money from my Estate during the nine

years I was absent from it, and brought none home with me. Those who owed me, for the most part, took advantage of the depreciation, and paid me off with six pence in the pound. Those to whom I was indebted, I have yet to pay, without other means, if they will not wait, than selling part of my Estate; or distressing those who were too honest to take advantage of the tender Laws to quit scores with me.

This relation of my circumstances, which is a true one, is alone sufficient, (without adding that my living under the best œconomy I can use, must unavoidably be expensive,) to convince you of my inability to advance money.

I have heard with pleasure that you are industrious. Convince people by your mode of living that you are sober and frugal also; and I persuade myself your creditors will grant you every indulgence they can. It would be no small inducement to me, if it should ever be in my power, to assist you. * * *

TO JOHN WITHERSPOON.

MOUNT VERNON, 10 March, 1784.

REVEREND SIR,

The recourse, which I have had to my papers since I returned home, reminds me of a question, which you asked me in Philadelphia, respecting my lands to the westward of the Allegany mountains; to which I was unprepared at that time to give a decided answer, either as to the quantity I had to let, or the terms upon which I would lease them.

Upon examination, I find that I have patents under the signature of Lord Dunmore (while he administered the government of this State) for about 30,000 acres; and surveys for about 10,000 more, patents for which were suspended by the disputes with Great Britain, which soon followed the return of the warrants to the land-office.

Ten thousand acres of the above thirty lie upon the Ohio; the rest on the Great Kenhawa, a river nearly as large, and quite as easy in its navigation, as the former. The whole of it is rich bottom land, beautifully situated on these rivers, and abounding plenteously in fish, wild-fowl, and game of all kinds.

The uppermost tract upon the Ohio (which I incline to lease) contains 2314 acres, and begins about four miles below the mouth of the Little Kenhawa (there are two rivers bearing that name, the uppermost of which is about one hundred and eighty miles below Fort Pitt by water), and has a front on the water of more than five miles. The next is eighteen miles lower down, and contains 2448 acres, with a front on the river, and a large creek which empties into it of four miles and upwards. Three miles below this again, on the same river, and just above what is called the Big Bend in Evan's Map, is a third tract of 4395 acres, with a river front of more than five miles.

Then going to the Great Kenhawa, distant about twelve miles by land, but thirty odd to follow the meanders of the two rivers, and beginning within three miles of the mouth, I hold lands on the right

and left of the river, and bounded thereby forty-eight miles and a half; all of which, being on the margin of the river, and extending not more than from half a mile to a mile back, are, as has been observed before, rich, low grounds.

From this description of my lands, with the aid of Evan's or Hutchins's Map of that country, a good general knowledge of their situation may be obtained by those, who incline to become adventurers in the settlement of them; but it may not be improper to observe further, that they were surveyed under the Royal Proclamation of 1763 (granting to each commissioned and non-commissioned officer according to his rank, and to the private soldier certain quantities,) and under a yet older proclamation from Mr. Dinwiddie, then lieutenant-governor of the colony, issued by the advice of his council to encourage and benefit the military adventurers of the year 1754, while the land-office was shut against all other applicants. It is not reasonable to suppose, therefore, that those, who had the first choice, had five years allowed them to make it, and a large district to survey in, were inattentive either to the quality of the soil, or the advantages of situation.

But supposing no preëminence in quality, the title to these lands is indisputable; and, by lying on the south-east side of the Ohio, they are not subject to the claims of the Indians; consequently will be free from their disturbances, and from the disputes, in which the settlers on the northwest side (when the Indians shall permit any) and even on the same side

lower down will be involved; for it should seem, that there is already location upon location, and scarce any thing else talked of but land-jobbing and monopolies, before Congress have even settled the terms upon which the ceded lands are to be obtained.

Having given this account of the land, I am brought to another point, which is more puzzling to me.

I have been long endeavoring to hit upon some mode, by which the grantor and grantees of these lands might be mutually considered and equally satisfied, but find it no easy matter; as it is to be presumed that all adventurers, especially emigrants from foreign countries, would not only *choose* but *expect* leases for a long term. In this case, it is difficult in an infant country, where lands rise progressively, and I might add rapidly in value, to fix upon a rent, which will not, in the first instance, startle the tenant by its magnitude, or injure the landlord in the course of a few years by the inadequacy of it. What course then is to be taken?

To advance the rent periodically, in proportion to the *supposed* increasing value of the land, is very speculative; and to leave it to the parties, or their representatives, or to persons to be chosen by them, at like stated periods to determine the increase of it, would not only be vague and uncertain, but more than probably open a door for many disputes, and prove very unsatisfactory to both sides. Yet, difficult as the case is, private and public considerations urging me thereto, I have come to a resolution, which I am going to promulge in the gazettes of this country, by inserting an advertisement of which the enclosed is a copy,

leaving it optional in the grantees to make choice of either.

Whether the terms there promulged are sufficiently encouraging to the people of this country, and inviting to strangers; or whether the latter might think so in the first instance, and change sentiments afterwards, upon seeing a wide, a wild, and an extensive country before them, in which they may, for ought I know, obtain good, though not so valuable and pleasant spots upon easier terms, is not with me to decide. Experiment alone can determine it. But it is for me to declare, that I cannot think of separating for ever from lands, which are beautifully situated upon navigable rivers, rich in quality, and abundantly blessed with many natural advantages, upon less beneficial terms to myself.

The leases for short tenures, if these should be preferred to either of the other two, could be attended with no great injury to me, because the improvements, which (according to the conditions of them) are to be made thereon, will enable me, if I am not too sanguine in my expectation, to rent them thereafter upon more lucrative terms, than I dare ask for either of the other two at present.

It has been my intention in every thing I have said, and will be so in every thing I shall say on this subject to be perfectly candid; for my feelings would be as much hurt, if I should deceive others by a too favorable description, as theirs would be who might suffer by the deception.

I will only add, that it would give me pleasure to

see these lands seated by particular societies, or religious sectaries with their pastors. It would be a means of connecting friends in a small circle, and making life in a new and rising empire (to the inhabitants of which, and their habits, new comers would be strangers) pass much more agreeably than in a mixed or dispersed situation.

If a plan of this sort should be relished, it would be highly expedient for an agent in behalf of such societies to come out immediately, to view the lands and close a bargain; for nothing is more probable, than that each of the tracts here enumerated may, if the matter is delayed, have settlers upon it, an intermixture with whom might not be agreeable.

The number of families, which these tracts aggregately, or each one separately, would accommodate, depends more upon the views of the occupiers, than on any other circumstance. The soil is capable of the greatest production, such as Europeans have little idea of. For mere support, then, the smallest quantity would suffice; which I mention in this place, because a plan for the settlement of them, under the information here given of the quantity, quality, and situation, can be as well digested in Europe, as on the land itself, so far as it respects support only; and is to be preferred to a waste of time in ascertaining on the spot the number it would receive, and what each man shall have before the association is formed.

I will make no apology, my good Sir, for the length of this letter, presuming from your inquiries, when I

had the pleasure of seeing you last in Philadelphia, that you would not be displeased at the information I now give you, and might have a wish to communicate it to others. My best wishes attend you. With sentiments of great esteem and respect, I am, Reverend Sir, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

MOUNT VERNON, 18 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I have seen the form of the answer which you have drawn in Savage's suit, and approve it, presuming the references are founded on facts. Mr. Fairfax was to have compared these, & will prepare a fair copy. I will remind him of the matter, & have it sent to you as soon as I can.

The case of the depending petitions in the General Court, is as follows.—

The Land was obtained under a proclamation of Mr. Dinwiddie; issued by the advice of his Council, Feby. 19th, 1754, for encouraging the raising of Troops for an Expedition to the Ohio. It was surveyed pursuant to warrants granted by Lord Dunmore & patented Decr. 15th, 1772.—

For 10,990 acres, in Fincastle.

4,395
2,448 —in Botetourt.
2,314

In the Month of March, 1774, I encounter'd *in preparation only*, an expence of at least £300; by the purchase of Servants, Nails, Tools & other necessa-

ries for the purpose of seating and cultivating the above Lands, agreeably to our Act of Assembly; & for transporting the same over the Allighaney Mountains—but this was entirely sunk. The disturbances occasioned by the Indians, which immediately followed, put a stop to my proceedings—the Servants, some of them, engaged in the Militia—others squandered—& the whole were lost *to me;* while my Goods as I am informed, were seized for the use of the Militia & a fort which was built, upon the Expedition under Lord Dunmore, and no compensation made me for them—nor, if I am rightly informed, any thing given upon which I can found a claim.

The March following I went thro' the second edition of a similar expence, and find by having recourse to my papers, (since I came home) the certificates which I enclose herewith.

Not knowing what had been, or might be done in this second essay to cultivate my Lands (for I left home in May, while my people were out)—I wrote from Cambridge (in Septr., 1775)—to Mr. Everard requesting as a further security, that they might be covered by friendly Petitions; and presume I must have required Colo. Bassett to take measures accordingly. But never knew what, or whether any steps had been taken in this business, 'till Mr. Mercer (whom I saw at Fredericksburg the other day) and your Letter of the 19th of Feby. since, informed me of the depending Petitions.

Under this information and what follows, you will be so good as to do what shall appear necessary and

proper in my behalf. The Lands, by the Proclamation and Patents, are exempted from the payment of quit rent, 'till the expiration of fifteen years from and after the date of the latter: but my ignorance of the existing Laws of this State, since the change of its constitution, does not enable me to determine whether the old Act requiring cultivation and improvement, is yet in force, or not; consequently I can give no opinion upon the proper line of conduct to be pursued. Admitting however that this act is in force so far as it may apply to Lands under the circumstances mine are—yet the two principal tracts are nevertheless saved; as will appear by the records of Fincastle and Botetourt, where the aggregate of the valuations amount to £1583 15 7½, and the sum required to save the number of acres contained in them amounts to no more than £1538 10 0——And had it not been for the hostile temper of the Indians towards the close of 1775—which rendered it unsafe for my people to remain out, and who were actually driven in, to my very great loss in other respects (besides the non-cultivation) I should most undoubtedly, have saved the whole agreeably to Law.

Miss Lee, sister to the late Major Genl. Lee, wrote, requesting me to obtain for her an authenticated copy of his will—the copy I have lately got, but Mr. Drew thinks it may be necessary to affix the Seal of the State to it, as it is to go to England, I request the favor of you therefore to procure and send this to me by the post—the cost when made known to me I will pay.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

MOUNT VERNON, 20 March, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 21st ultimo did not reach my hands till yesterday. Having the governor here, and a house full of company, and the post being on the point of setting out for the eastward, I must confine the few lines I shall be able (at this time) to write, to the business of the Cincinnati.

From what you have said of the temper of your Assembly respecting this society, from the current of sentiment in the other New England States thereon, and from the official letter, which I have lately received from the Marquis de Lafayette on this subject, I am more than ever of opinion, that the general meeting at Philadelphia in May next ought, by all means, to be full and respectable. I was sorry to find these words, therefore, in your letter, after naming the delegates from your State,—" Probably only two will attend."

I think not only the whole number chosen should attend, but the abilities of them, should be coolly, deliberately, and wisely employed, when met, to obviate the prejudices and remove the jealousies, which are already imbibed, and more than probably, through ignorance, envy, and perhaps worse motives, will increase and spread. I cannot, therefore, forbear urging in strong terms the necessity of the measure. The ensuing general meeting is either *useful* or *useless;* if the former, the representatives of each State society ought to be punctual in their attendance,

especially under the present circumstances; if it is not, all ought to be exempted; and I am sure none can give the time, which this journey and business require, with less convenience to themselves than myself.

By a letter, which I have just received from General Greene, I am informed that himself, General Varnum, and Major Lyman are chosen to represent the society of the State of Rhode Island; that he intends to be in South Carolina before the meeting; and it is not expected that more than one will attend it! I wish this could be otherwise, and that General Greene would attend. Private interest or convenience may be a plea for many, and the meeting thereby be thin and unfit for the purpose of its institution.

I have heard nothing yet from New Hampshire, New York, or New Jersey, to the eastward, nor any thing from the southward; to the last, duplicates have long since been sent.

As there can be no interruption of the post by bad weather now, and there is time for it, pray let me hear more fully from you on the subject of this letter by the return of it; particularly what the committees of your Assembly have reported. * * *

TO TENCH TILGHMAN.

MOUNT VERNON, 24 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I am informed that a ship with Palatines is gone up to Baltimore, among whom are a number of tradesmen. I am a good deal in want of a house joiner and

brick-layer who really understand their profession, and you would do me a favor by purchasing one of each for me, if to be had, I would not confine you to Palatines; if they are good workmen, they may be from Asia, Africa or Europe; they may be Mahometans, Jews or Christians of any sect, or they may be Atheists. I would, however, prefer middle aged to young men, and those who have good countenances, and good characters on ship board, to others who have neither of these to recommend them; altho' after all, I well know, the proof of the pudding must be in the eating. I do not limit you to a price, but will pay the purchase money on demand. * * *

TO DR. JAMES CRAIK.

MOUNT VERNON, 25 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

In answer to Mr. Bowie's request to you, permit me to assure that gentleman, that I shall at all times be glad to see him at this retreat; that, whenever he is here, I will give him the perusal of any public papers antecedent to my appointment to the command of the American army, that he may be laying up materials for his work; and whenever Congress shall have opened their archives to any historian for information, that he shall have the examination of all others in my possession, which are subsequent thereto; but that, till this epoch, I do not think myself at liberty to unfold papers, which contain all the occurrences and transactions of my *late* command; first, because I conceive it to be respectful to the sov-

ereign power to let them take the lead in this business; and next, because I have, upon this principle, refused Dr. Gordon and others, who are about to write the history of the revolution, this privilege.

I will frankly declare to you, my dear Doctor, that any memoirs of my life, distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt my feelings than tickle my pride whilst I lived. I had rather glide gently down the stream of life, leaving it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than by any act of mine to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me. And I will further confess, that I was rather surprised into a consent, when Dr. Witherspoon (very unexpectedly) made the application, than considered the tendency of that consent. It did not occur to me, at that moment, from the manner in which the question was propounded, that no history of my life, without a very great deal of trouble indeed, could be written with the least degree of accuracy, unless recourse was had to me or to my papers for information; that it would not derive sufficient authenticity without a promulgation of this fact; and that such a promulgation would subject me to the imputation I have just mentioned, which would hurt me the more, as I do not think vanity is a trait of my character.

It is for this reason, and candor obliges me to be explicit, that I shall stipulate against the publication of the memoirs Mr. Bowie has in contemplation to give the world, till I should see more probability of avoiding the darts, which *I think* would be pointed at

me on such an occasion; and how far, under these circumstances, it would be worth Mr. Bowie's while to spend time, which might be more usefully employed in other matters, is with him to consider; as the practicability of doing it efficiently without having free access to the documents of this war, which must fill the most important pages of the memoir, and which, for the reasons already assigned, cannot be admitted at present, also is. If nothing happens more than I at present foresee, I shall be in Philadelphia on or before the 1st of May, where it is probable I may see Mr. Bowie, and converse further with him on this subject. In the mean while, I will thank you for communicating these sentiments. I am, very truly, your affectionate friend, &c.[1]

[1] Upon further consideration Washington decided against granting the application, and on March 8th, wrote to John Witherspoon: "From the cursory manner in which you expressed the wish of Mr. Bowie to write the memoirs of my life, I was not, at the moment of your application and my assent to it, struck with the consequences to which it tended; but, when I came to reflect upon the matter afterwards, and had some conversation with Mr. Bowie on the subject, I found that this must be a very futile work (if under *any* circumstances it could be made interesting), unless he could be furnished with the incidents of my life, either from my papers or my recollection, and digesting of past transactions into some sort of form and order with respect to times and circumstances. I knew, also, that many of the former, relative to the part I had acted in the war between France and Great Britain, from the year 1754 until the peace of Paris, and which contained some of the most interesting occurrences of my life, were lost, and that my memory is too treacherous to be relied on to supply this defect; and, admitting both were more perfect, that submitting such a publication to the world, whilst I continue on the theatre, might be ascribed, (however involuntarily I was led into it,) to vain motives.

"These considerations prompted me to tell Mr. Bowie, when I saw him at Philadelphia in May last, that I could have no agency towards the publication of any memoirs respecting myself whilst living; but as I had given my assent to you (when asked) to have them written, and as he had been the first to propose it, he was welcome, if he thought his time would not be unprofitably spent, to take extracts from such documents as yet remained in my possession, and to

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, IN CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 29 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

It was not in my power to answer your favor of the 15th by the last post, for the reason then assigned. I wish I may be able to do it to your satisfaction now, as I again am obliged to pay my attention to the other company, the Governor being gone.

My opinion coincides perfectly with yours respecting the practicability of an easy and short communication between the waters of the Ohio and Potomac, of the advantages of that communication and the preference it has over all others, and of the policy there would be in this State of Maryland to adopt and render it facile. But I confess to you freely, I have no expectation, that the public will adopt the measure; for, besides the jealousies which prevail, and the difficulty of proportioning such funds as may be allotted for the purposes you have mentioned, there are two others, which, in my opinion, will be yet harder to surmount. These are (if I have not imbibed too unfavorable an opinion of my countrymen) the im-

avail himself of any other information I could give, provided the publication should be suspended until I quitted the stage of human action. I then intended, as I informed him, to devote the present expiring winter to arranging my papers, which I had left at home, and which I found a mere mass of confusion, (occasioned by frequently shifting them into trunks, and suddenly removing them from the reach of the enemy); but, however strange it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that, what with company, references of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled, applications for certificates and copies of orders, in addition to the routine of letters, which have multiplied greatly upon me, I have not been able to touch a single paper, or transact any business of my own in the way of accounts, during the whole course of the winter; or, in a word, since my retirement from public life."

practicability of bringing the great and truly wise policy of the measure to their view, and the difficulty of extracting money from them for such a purpose, if it could be done; for it appears to me, maugre all the sufferings of the public creditors, breach of public faith, and loss of reputation, that payment of the taxes, which are already laid, will be postponed as long as possible. How then are we to expect new ones for purposes more remote?

I am not so disinterested in this matter as you are; but I am made very happy to find that a man of discernment and liberality, who has no particular interest in the plan, thinks as I do, who have lands in that country, the value of which would be enhanced by the adoption of such a measure.

More than ten years ago I was struck with the importance of it; and, despairing of any aids from the public, I became a principal mover of a bill to empower a number of subscribers to undertake at their own expense, on conditions which were expressed, the extension of the navigation from tide water to Will's Creek, about one hundred and fifty miles; and I devoutly wish that this may not be the only expedient by which it can be effected now. To get this business in motion, I was obliged even upon that ground to comprehend James River, in order to remove the jealousies, which arose from the attempt to extend the navigation of the Potomac. The plan, however, was in a tolerably good train, when I set out for Cambridge in 1775, and would have been in an excellent way, had it not been for the difficulties,

which were met with in the Maryland Assembly from the opposition which was given (according to report) by the Baltimore merchants, who were alarmed, and perhaps not without cause, at the consequence of water transportation to Georgetown of the produce, which usually came to their market by land.[1]

The local interest of that place, joined to the short-sighted politics or contracted views of another part of that Assembly, gave Mr. Thomas Johnson, who was a warm promoter of the scheme on the north side of the Potomac, a great deal of trouble. In this situation I left matters when I took command of the army. The war afterwards called men's attention to different

[1] The failure of Maryland to co-operate with Virginia in the undertaking, and the outbreak of the Revolution, led to the abandonment of this early attempt to open the navigation of the River. In her first constitution (1776) Virginia, in substance, ceded to Maryland the entire jurisdiction over the River Potomac, reserving only the right of navigation,—a surrender the more extraordinary, as the patents of the N[orthern] Neck place the whole river Potomac within the Government of Virginia; so that we were armed with a title both of prior and posterior date to that of Maryland. (Madison.) To determine the points in controversy Virginia proposed the appointment by each State interested, of commissioners, "for the general purpose of preserving a harmony and efficacy in the regulations on both sides." This proposition was accepted by Maryland; and Col. George Mason, Edmund Randolph, Alexander Henderson, and James Madison, Jr., were named by Virginia, to meet Thomas Johnson, Thomas Stone, Samuel Chase, and Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, on the part of Maryland. Through a series of blunders, only Mason and Henderson met Chase and Jenifer at Alexandria in March, 1785, and on the 25th, they proceeded to Mount Vernon, having been joined by Stone. Here their business was completed, and recommendations drawn for their respective legislatures, to provide for the establishment of a concurrent jurisdiction on the Potomac and Chesapeake, and for the appointment annually of commissioners to discuss the commercial regulations proposed by each State. This led to results more important than the conference could have foreseen. For Maryland extended an invitation to Pennsylvania and Delaware to join the annual meeting, and Madison thought a general meeting "naturally grew out" of this proposition. The Annapolis Convention of September, 1786, was the fulfilment of Madison's thought.

objects, and all the money they could or would raise was applied to other purposes. But with you I am satisfied that not a moment ought to be lost in recommencing this business, as I know the Yorkers will delay no time to remove every obstacle in the way of the other communication, so soon as the posts of Oswego and Niagara are surrendered; and I shall be mistaken if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of *coasting* on either side.

It appears to me, that the interest and policy of Maryland are proportionably concerned with those of Virginia, to remove obstructions, and to invite the trade of the western country into the channel you have mentioned. You will have frequent opportunities of learning the sentiments of the principal characters of that State, respecting this matter; and I wish, if it should fall in your way, that you would discourse with Mr. Thomas Johnson, formerly governor of Maryland, on this subject. How far, upon mature consideration, I may depart from the resolution I had formed, of living perfectly at my ease, exempt from every kind of responsibility, is more than I can at present absolutely determine. The sums granted, the manner of granting them, the powers and objects, would merit consideration. The trouble, if my situation at the time would permit me to engage in a work of this sort, would be set at nought; and the immense advantages, which this country would derive from the measure, would be no small stimulus to the undertaking, if that undertaking could be made to comport

with those ideas, and that line of conduct, with which I meant to glide gently down the current of life, and it did not interfere with any other plan I might have in contemplation.

I am not less in sentiment with you, respecting the impolicy of this State's grasping at more territory than they are competent to the government of; and, for the reasons you assign, I very much approve of a meridian from the mouth of the Great Kanhawa as a convenient and very proper line of separation, but I am mistaken if our chief magistrate will coincide with us in this opinion.[1]

I will not enter upon the subject of commerce. It has its advantages and disadvantages; but which of them preponderates, is not now the question. From trade our citizens will not be restrained, and therefore it behoves us to place it in the most convenient channels under proper regulations, freed as much as possible from those vices, which luxury, the consequence of wealth and power, naturally introduce.

The incertitude, which prevails in Congress, and the non-attendance of its members, are discouraging to those, who are willing and ready to discharge the trust, which is reposed in them; whilst it is disgraceful in a high degree to our country. But it is my belief, the case will never be otherwise, so long as that body persist in their present mode of doing business,

[1] Jefferson appears to have proposed a cession of a certain tract of the Western country lying between the Kanawha and the Ohio, to be incorporated into the Union. Madison rightly answered that three parties must be consulted—Virginia, Congress, and the inhabitants of the ceded territory. "I have no reason," he said, "to believe there will be any repugnance on the part of Virginia."

and will hold constant instead of annual sessions; against the former of which my mind furnishes me with a variety of arguments; but not one, in times of peace, against the latter.

Annual sessions would always produce a full representation, and alertness at business. The delegates. after a separation of eight or ten months, would meet each other with glad countenances. They would be complaisant; they would yield to each other all, that duty to their constituents would allow; and they would have better opportunities of becoming acquainted with their sentiments, and removing improper prejudices, when they are imbibed, by mixing with them during the recess. Men, who are always together, get tired of each other's company; they throw off that restraint, which is necessary to keep things in proper tune; they say and do things, which are personally disgusting; this begets opposition; opposition begets faction; and so it goes on, till business is impeded, often at a stand. I am sure (having the business prepared by proper boards or a committee) an annual session of two months would despatch more business than is now done in twelve, and this by a full representation of the Union.

Long as this letter is, I intended to be more full on some of the points, and to touch on others; but it is not in my power, as I am obliged to snatch the moments, which give you this hasty production of my thoughts on the subject of your letter, from company. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

P. S. Have you not estimated the distance from Cuyahoga to New York too high.

TO HUGH WILLIAMSON, IN CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 31 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The last post brought me your favor of the 24th. The sentiments I shall deliver in answer to it must be considered as coming from an individual only, for I am as unacquainted with the opinions, and know as little of the affairs and present management of the Swamp Company in Virginia (though a member of it) as you do, perhaps less, as I have received nothing from thence, nor have heard any thing of my interest therein for more than nine years.

I am equally uninformed of the motives, which induced the Assembly of Virginia to open a canal between Kemp's and the Northwest Landings, but presume territorial jurisdiction must have been the governing principle.

From an attentive examination of the Great Dismal Swamp, I have been long satisfied of the practicability of opening a communication through Drummond's Pond between the rivers, which empty into Albemarle Sound, and the waters of Elizabeth or Nansemond River. Once, for the purpose of forming a plan for reclaiming the lands, more than with a view to the benefit of navigation, I traversed Drummond's Pond through its whole circuit; and at a time when it was brimful of water. I lay one night on the east border of it, on ground something above the common level of the swamp; and in the morning, I had the curiosity to ramble as far into the swamp as I could get with convenience, to the distance perhaps of five hundred yards; and found that the water,

which, at the margin of the lake (after it had exceeded its natural bounds) was stagnant, began perceptibly to move eastward; and at the extent of my walk it had deepened, got more into a channel, and increased obviously in its motion. This discovery left not a doubt in my mind that the current was descending into one of the rivers of Albemarle Sound. To ascertain it, I directed our manager to hire persons to explore it fully. To the best of my recollection, he some time afterwards informed me, that he had done so, that it was found to be the head of the northwest river, that to the place where the water had formed a regular channel of considerable width and depth did not exceed four miles, and that from thence downwards to the present navigation of the river there was no other obstruction to small craft than fallen trees. What I have given as coming under my own knowledge, you may rely upon. The other I sufficiently believe, and have no doubt but that the waters of Perquemins and Pasquotank Rivers have a similar, and perhaps as close a communication with Drummond's Pond, as those of the northwest.

My researches at different times into and round the swamp (for I have encompassed the whole) have enabled me to make the following observations; that the principal rivulets, which run into the Great Dismal, if not all of them, are to the westward of it, from Suffolk southwardly, that Drummond's Pond is the receptacle for all the water, which can force its way into it through the reeds, roots, trash, and fallen timber, with which the swamp abounds; that to these obstructions, and the almost perfect level of the

swamp, are to be ascribed the wetness of it; that, in wet seasons, when the banks of the pond are overflowed by the assemblage of waters from the quarter I have mentioned, it discharges itself with equal difficulty into the heads of the rivers Elizabeth and Nansemond, and those which flow into Albemarle Sound; for it is a fact, that the late Colonel Tucker of Norfolk, on a branch of Elizabeth River, and several others on Nansemond River, have mills, which are, or have been, worked by the waters which run out of the swamp.

Hence, and from a canal, which the Virginia Company opened some years since, I am convinced, that there is not a difference of more than two feet between one part of the swamp and another; that the east side and south end are lower than their opposites; and that a canal of that depth, when the water of Drummond's Pond is even with its banks, and more or less in the proportion it rises or sinks, will take the water of it, and, with the aid of one lock, let it into either Elizabeth River or Nansemond; neither of which, from the best information I have been able to obtain, would exceed six or seven miles. Admitting these things, and I firmly believe in them, the kind of navigation will determine the expense, having due consideration to the difficulty, which must be occasioned by the quantity of water, and little fall by which it can be run off.

To attempt, in the first instance, such a canal as would admit any vessel, which the Bay of Albemarle is competent to, would in my opinion be tedious, and attended with an expense, which might prove dis-

couraging; whilst one upon a more contracted scale would answer very valuable purposes, and might be enlarged as the practicability of the measure, and the advantages resulting from it, should be unfolded; appropriating the money, which shall arise from the toll, after principal and interest are fully paid, as a fund for the further extension of the navigation, which in my opinion would be exceedingly practicable, and would be found the readiest and easiest plan to bring it to perfection.

If this method should be adopted, I would very readily join my mite towards the accomplishment, provided the canal, which the State of Virginia is about to cut, should not render it an unnecessary or unprofitable undertaking. A more extended plan would be too heavy for my purse.

I agree in sentiment with you, that, whenever the public is disposed to reimburse principal and interest to the corporation, and will open a free passage of the canal, the charter should cease; but I do not think eight per cent is adequate, I mean sufficiently inviting, nor ten either, unless government, in the act for incorporation, were to guaranty the expense, and be at the final risk of the success, and would have, though not an exorbitant, yet a fixed toll, and one which should be judged fully competent to answer the purpose; because it is not less easy than pleasing to reduce it at any time, but it would be found difficult and disgusting, however necessary and urgent, to increase it.

In other respects, my opinion differs not from yours, or the propositions you enclosed to, Sir, your most obedient, &c.

TO THE MARCHIONESS DE LAFAYETTE.

MOUNT VERNON, 4 April, 1784.

MADAM,

It is now more than ever I want words to express the sensibility and gratitude, with which the honor of your felicitations of the 26th of December has inspired me. If my expression was equal to the feelings of my heart, the homage I am about to render you would appear in a more favorable point of view, than my most sanguine expectations will encourage me to hope for. I am more inclined, therefore, to rely upon the continuance of your indulgent sentiments towards me, and that innate goodness for which you are remarkable, than upon any merit I possess, or any assurances I could give of my sense of the obligation I am under for the honor you have conferred upon me by your correspondence.

Great as your claim is, as a French or American woman, or as the wife of my amiable friend, to my affectionate regards, you have others to which the palm must be yielded. The charms of your person, and the beauties of your mind, have a more powerful operation. These, Madam, have endeared you to me, and every thing, which partakes of your nature, will have a claim to my affections. George and Virginia, the offspring of your love, whose names do honor to my country and to myself, have a double claim, and will be the objects of my vows.

From the clangor of arms and the bustle of a camp, freed from the cares of public employment and the responsibility of office, I am now enjoying domestic

ease under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig tree; and in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins around me, I expect to glide gently down the stream of life, till I am entombed in the dreary mansion of my fathers.

Mrs. Washington is highly honored by your participations, and feels very sensibly the force of your polite invitation to Paris; but she is too far advanced in life, and is too much immersed in the care of her little progeny,[1] to cross the Atlantic. This, my dear Marchioness (indulge me with this freedom), is not the case with you. You have youth (and, if you should not incline to bring your children, can leave them with all the advantages to education), and must have a curiosity to see the country, young, rude, and uncultivated as it is, for the liberties of which your husband has fought, bled, and acquired much glory, where every body admires, every body loves him. Come, then, let me entreat it, and call my cottage your home; for your own doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet the rustic civility; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court, when you return to Versailles. In these wishes, and in most respectful compliments, Mrs. Washington joins me. With sentiments of strong attachment, and very great regard, I have the honor to be, Madam, &c.

[1] The children of her son, John Parke Custis.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MOUNT VERNON, 8 April, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

If with frankness, and the fullest latitude of a friend, you will give me your opinion of the institution of the Society of Cincinnati, it would confer an acceptable favor upon me. If to this opinion, you would be so obliging as to add the sentiments, or what you *suppose* to be the sentiments of Congress respecting it, I would thank you.

That you may have the best materials on which to form a judgment, I send you a copy of the proceedings of the Society—consequent of their choice of me for President pro: tem:, and the direction therein; I sent the Institution to the French land and naval commanders, and to the Marquis de la Fayette (as the senior French officer in the American Army,)—whose proceedings thereon, I also enclose.

These papers you will please to retain for fear of accidents, till I shall have the pleasure to see you at Annapolis, the week after next, on my way to Philadelphia, where this and other business will take me, but the sooner I could receive your sentiments on this subject, the more pleasing they would be.

The pamphlet ascribed to Mr. Burke, as I am told, had its effect—people are alarmed, especially in the Eastern States—how justly, or how contrary to the avowed principles of the Society, and the purity of their motives, I will not declare; lest it should appear that I wanted to biass your judgment, rather than to obtain an opinion—which if you please, might

be accompanied with sentiments, under the information here given respecting the most eligible measures to be pursued by the Society at their next meeting.[1]

You may be assured, Sir, that to the good opinion alone, which I entertain of your abilities and candor, this liberty is to be attributed; and I can truly add, that, with very great esteem & regard, I am &c.[2]

[1] A pamphlet had been published, entitled *Considerations on the Society, or Order, of Cincinnati*, which, although anonymous, was known to have been written by Judge Ædanus Burke of South Carolina. It was the author's chief purpose to show, that the society created a nobility, or what he called a class of "*hereditary patricians*"; and he predicted very direful consequences to the liberty and happiness of the people, if the institution were allowed to gain strength upon the plan of its original establishment. He recommended legislative interference to put a stop to a political combination of military commanders, fraught with principles so dangerous, and portending to the republic evils so alarming. The pamphlet was a local political attack, directed against the Carolina leaders who were members of the Society. Jefferson's reply to Washington is printed in his *Works*, i., 333.

[2] "The choice of your delegates to the general meeting of the Society of Cincinnati gave me pleasure. I wish very sincerely you would *all* attend. Let me impress this upon *you*, with a request that you would impress it upon your *brothers* of the delegation.

"This meeting, considering the prejudices and jealousies which have arisen, should not only be respectable in *numbers*, but respectable in *abilities*. Our measures should be deliberate and wise. If we cannot convince the people, that their fears are ill founded, we should at least in a degree yield to them, and not suffer that, which was intended for the best of purposes, to produce a bad one; which will be the consequence of divisions, proceeding from an opposition to the current opinion, if this be the fact in the eastern States, as *some* say it is. Independent of this, there are other matters, which call for attention at the ensuing meeting.

"You will oblige me by having the enclosed advertisement inserted (twice) in a gazette of your State. The one, which is most diffusive among that class of people, whose views it is most likely to meet, will answer my purposes best."—*Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr.*, 4 April, 1784.

The Society held a general meeting at Philadelpia, and Washington reduced to writing his ideas on the alterations to be made in the constitution.

"Strike out every word, sentence and clause, which has a political tendency.

"Discontinue the hereditary part in all its connections, *absolutely*, without

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

PHILADELPHIA, 15 May, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

It was with great pleasure and thankfulness I received a recognisance of your friendship, in your letter of the 20th of last month.

It is indeed a pleasure, from the walks of private life to view in retrospect all the meanderings of our

any substitution, which can be construed into concealment, or a change of ground *only;* for this would, in my opinion, increase, rather then allay suspicions.

"Admit no more honorary members into the society.

"Reject subscriptions or donations from every person, who is not a citizen of the United States.

"Place the funds upon such a footing, as to remove the jealousies, which are entertained on that score.

"Respecting the funds, it would be magnanimous to place them, in the first instance, in the hand of the legislatures for the *express purposes* for which they were intended. This would show a generous confidence in our country, which might be productive of favorable sentiments and returns. . . .

"Abolish the general meetings altogether as unnecessary. The constitution being firm, a continuation of them would be expensive, and very probably, from a diversity of sentiment and tenacity of opinion, might be productive of more dissension than harmony; for it has been much observed, 'that nothing loosens the bands of private friendship more, than for friends to put themselves against each other in public debate where every one is free to speak and to act.' District meetings might also be discontinued, as of very little use, but attractive of much speculation.

"No alterations, short of what are here enumerated, will, in my opinion, reconcile the society to the community. Whether these will do it, is questionable. Without being possessed of the reasons which induce many gentlemen to retain their *order* or badge of the society, it will be conceived by the public, that the order (which except in its perpetuity still appears in the same terrific array as at first) is a feather we cannot consent to pluck from *ourselves*, though we have taken it from our descendants. If we assign the reasons, we might, I presume, as well discontinue the orders."

Many of these suggested alterations were made and a circular letter to the State Societies, dated 15 May, 1784, was prepared by John Dickinson, of Pennsylvania, Col. Henry Lee, of Virginia, and Col. David Humphreys, of New York, setting forth the changes. It was signed by Washington as President.

"The elections for this year have proved the readiness of the citizens to incorporate the military with the civil. I have heard of the success of some

past labors, the difficulties through which we have waded, and the happy haven to which the ship has been brought. Is it possible, after this, that it should founder? Will not the All-wise and All-powerful Director of human events preserve it? I think he will. He may, however, (for some wise purpose of his own,) suffer our indiscretions and folly to place our national character low in the political scale; and this, unless more wisdom and less prejudice take the lead in our government, will most certainly happen.

Believe me, my dear Sir, there is no disparity in our ways of thinking and acting, though there may happen to be a little in the years we have lived, which places the advantage of the correspondence on my side, as I shall benefit by your experience and observations; and that no correspondence can be more pleasing to me than that, which originates from similar sentiments and similar conduct through (though not a long war, the importance of it and attainments considered,) a painful contest. I pray you, therefore, to continue me among the number of your friends,

military candidates in different counties, and of the rejection of one only. This repudiation was effected by Burk's pamphlet against the Cincinnati; which had circulated very widely through the southern parts of Virginia and particularly Mecklenberg. Perhaps the indisposition of the people towards the society in general was much heightened when applied to Col. Hopkins, the candidate who miscarried, by a report that he was deputy to the convention shortly to be holden in Philadelphia. How far General W[ashington] patronizes the association, is, as yet, an impenetrable secret. It has, however, been said for him, that in his opinion, neither Burk, nor the author who answered him, understood the principles of the institution."—*Randolph to Jefferson*, 24 April, 1784.

"I am perfectly convinced, that, if the first institution of this Society had not been parted with, ere this we should have had the country in an uproar,

and to favor me with such observations and sentiments as may occur.

As my good friend, Colonel Trumbull, is perfectly acquainted with the proceedings of the meeting, which brought us together, our embarrassments and final decision, I will refer the detail of them to him. With the most perfect esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO RUFUS PUTNAM.

DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 2 June, 1784.

I could not answer your favor of the 5th ulto., from Phila., because Genl. Knox having mislaid, only presented the letter to me, in the moment of my departure from that place. The sentiments of esteem and friendship which breathe in it, are exceedingly pleasing and flattering to me—and you may rest assured they are reciprocal.

I wish it was in my power to give you a more favorable account of the officers' petition for Lands on the Ohio and its waters, than I am about to do.—After this, and information respecting the establishment for

and a line of separation drawn between this Society and their fellow-citizens. The alterations, which took place at the last general meeting, have quieted the clamors, which in many of the States were rising to a great height; but I have not heard yet of the incorporation of any Society by the State to which it belongs, which is an evidence, in my mind, that the jealousies of the people are rather asleep than removed on this occasion."—*Washington to St. Clair*, 31 August, 1785.

[1] It was Washington's wish to go from Philadelphia to the Falls of Niagara, and into Canada. "Two causes prevent it. My private concerns are of such a nature, that it is morally impossible for me to be absent long from home at this juncture. . . . The other is, that I am not disposed to be indebted for my passport to Niagara to the courtesy of the British, who are still I believe possessed of our western posts."—*Washington to Schuyler*, 15 May, 1784.

Peace, were my enquiries solely directed, as I passed thro' Annapolis on my way to Philadelphia,—but I could not learn that any thing decisive had been done in either. On the latter Congress are differing about their powers, but as they have accepted of the cession from Virginia, and have resolved to lay off ten new States bounded by latitudes and longitudes, it should be supposed that they will determine something respecting the former before they adjourn, and yet I very much question it, as the latter event is to happen on the third of next month.

As the Congress, who are to meet in November next by adjournment, will be composed from a new choice of Delegates in each State, it is not in my power at this time, to direct you to a proper correspondence in that body. I wish I could, for persuaded I am, that to some such causes as you have assigned may be ascribed the delay which the petition has encountered; —for *surely*, if *justice* and gratitude to the Officers, and the *general* policy of the Union, were to govern in this case, there would not be the smallest interruption in granting their request. I really feel for those Gentlemen who, by these unaccountable (by any other means than those which you have suggested) delays, are held in such an awkward and disagreeable state of suspence; and wish my endeavors could remove the obstacles. At Princeton (before Congress left that place) I exerted every power I was master of, and dwelt upon the arguments you have used to shew the propriety of a speedy decision. Every member with whom I conversed acquiesced in the justice of

the petition; all yielded, or seemed to yield to the policy of it, but plead the want of cession of the Land to act upon.—This is made, and accepted, and yet matters (as far as they have come to my knowledge) remain in statu quo.—

I am endeavoring to do something with the Lands I now hold, and have had in that Country these twelve or fourteen years. The enclosed contains the terms upon which I propose to lease them. I am not sanguine in obtaining Tenants on them in this country; and yet on leases renewable forever—or for the term of 999 years. I will not (considering the peculiar situation and advantages of these Lands) take less. For a *short* time I care little about the rent, because, knowing the value and convenience of the Land, I am certain that the improvements which are to be made thereon, will enable me thereafter to command my own terms. If you think the promulgation of them can be of service to others, or myself, it is optional with you to do it. With very sincere &c.

TO JAMES MADISON.

MOUNT VERNON, 12 June, 1784.

SIR,

Can nothing be done in our Assembly for poor Paine? Must the merits and services of *Common Sense* continue to glide down the stream of time unrewarded by this country? His writings certainly have had a powerful effect upon the public mind. Ought they not, then, to meet an adequate return? He is poor,

he is chagrined, and almost, if not altogether, in despair of relief. New York, not the least distressed, nor best able State in the Union, has done something for him. This kind of provision he prefers to an allowance from Congress. He has reasons for it, which to him are conclusive; and such, I think, as may be approved by others. His views are moderate; a decent independency is, I believe, all he aims at. Ought he to be disappointed of this? If you think otherwise, I am sure you will not only move the matter, but give it your support. For me, it only remains to feel for his situation; and to assure you of the sincere esteem and regard, with which I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] Similar letters were written to Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. The subject was brought before the legislature of Virginia, and it was proposed to give Mr. Paine a moiety of a tract of land on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

"The easy reception it found, induced the friends of the measure to add the other moiety to the proposition, which would have raised the market value of the donation to about four thousand pounds, or upwards, though it would not probably have commanded a rent of more than one hundred pounds per annum. In this form the bill passed through two readings. The third reading proved, that the tide had suddenly changed, for the bill was thrown out by a large majority. An attempt was next made to sell the land in question, and apply two thousand pounds of the money to the purchase of a farm for Mr. Paine. This was lost by a single voice. Whether a greater disposition to reward patriotic and distinguished exertions of genius will be found on any succeeding occasion, is not for me to predetermine. Should it finally appear, that the merits of the man, whose writings have so much contributed to enforce and foster the spirit of independence in the people of America, are unable to inspire them with a just beneficence, the world, it is to be feared, will give us as little credit for our policy as for our gratitude in this particular."—*Madison's Letter*, July 2d.

Mr. Lee wrote that he was not present when the proposition was brought forward. "I have been told," said he, "that it miscarried from its being observed, that he had shown enmity to this State by having written a pamphlet injurious to our claim of western territory. It has ever appeared to me, that this pamphlet was the consequence of Mr. Paine's being himself imposed upon,

TO DR. JAMES CRAIK.

MOUNT VERNON, 10 July, 1784.

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have come to a resolution, (if not prevented by any thing at present unforeseen,) to take a trip to the western country this fall, and for that purpose to leave home the first of September. By appointment I am to be at the Warm Springs the 7th of that month; and at Gilbert Simpson's the 15th, where, having my partnership accounts, with some of very long standing, to settle, and things to provide for the trip to the Kanhawa, I expect to be by the 10th or 11th, that is, four or five days before the 15th. It is

and that it was rather the fault of the place than the man."—July 22d. Arthur Lee was most responsible for the failure of the measure, for he was active in cultivating a prejudice against Paine. This was somewhat ungracious, as Paine had befriended Lee in his controversy with Deane.

The pamphlet here alluded to was entitled, *Public Good; being an Examination into the Claim of Virginia to the vacant Western Territory, and of the Right of the United States to the same; 1780.*

In the order of dates we may here introduce the following resolution, passed by the legislature of Virginia on the 22d of June.

"Resolved, that the Executive be requested to take measures for procuring a statue of General Washington to be of the finest marble, and best workmanship, with the following inscription on its pedestal:

"'The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia have caused this statue to be erected as a Monument of Affection and Gratitude to George Washington, who, uniting to the Endowments of the Hero the Virtues of the Patriot, and exerting both in establishing the Liberties of his Country, has rendered his Name dear to his Fellow Citizens, and given the World an immortal Example of true Glory.'"

This statue was executed by Houdon, who was employed by Mr. Jefferson, at the request of the governor of Virginia, and who came to America in the summer of 1785 for the express purpose of taking an exact cast of General Washington's features and person. He returned to Paris and finished his work in that place. The statue has always been considered as exhibiting a remarkable resemblance of the original. It is placed in the State-House at Richmond.—*Sparks.*

possible, though of this I cannot be certain at this time, that I shall, if I find it necessary to lay my lands off in lots, make a day or two's delay at each of my tracts upon the Ohio, before I reach the Kanhawa, where my stay will be the longest, and more or less according to circumstances.

I mention all these matters, that you may be fully apprized of my plan, and the time it may probably take to accomplish it. If, under this information, it would suit you to go with me, I should be very glad of your company. No other except my nephew, Bushrod Washington, and that is uncertain, will be of the party; because it can be no amusement to others to follow me in a tour of business, and from one of my tracts of land to another; (for I am not going to explore the country, nor am I in search of fresh lands, but to secure what I have;) nor would it suit me to be embarrassed by the plans, movements, or whims of others, or even to have my own made unwieldy. For this reason I shall continue to decline all overtures, which may be made to accompany me. Your business and mine lays in the same part of the country, and are of a similar nature; the only difference is, that mine may be longer in the execution. If you go, you will have occasion to take nothing from hence, but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper at make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either to my place on the Youghiogany, or Fort Pitt, measures for this pur-

pose having been already taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want. My compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Craik and your family, and I am, with sincere esteem and friendship, dear Sir, yours, &c.[1]

TO CLEMENT BIDDLE.

MOUNT VERNON, 28 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The mulatto fellow, William, who has been with me all the war, is attached (married he says) to one of his own color, a free woman, who during the war, was

[1] The General Assembly of Virginia, on the 22d of June, voted an address to General Washington. A joint committee, appointed for the purpose by the two Houses, waited on him a few days afterwards at Mount Vernon, and presented to him the address in behalf of the Assembly to which, on the 15th of July, he made the following reply:

"With feelings, which are more easy to be conceived than expressed, I meet and reciprocate the congratulations of the representatives of this commonwealth on the final establishment of peace.

"Nothing can add more to the pleasure, which arises from a conscious discharge of public trust, than the approbation of one's country. To have been so happy, under a vicissitude of fortune, amidst the difficult and trying scenes of an arduous conflict, as to meet this, is, in my mind, to have attained the highest honor; and the consideration of it, in my present peaceful retirement, will heighten all my domestic joys, and constitute my greatest felicity.

"I should have been truly wanting in duty, and must have frustrated the great and important object for which we resorted to arms, if, seduced by a temporary regard for fame, I had suffered the paltry love of it to interfere with my country's welfare; the interest of which was the only inducement, which carried me into the field, or permitted the sacred rights of civil authority, though but for a moment, to be violated and infringed by a power, meant originally to rescue and confirm them.

"For those rewards and blessings, which you have invoked for me in this world, and for the fruition of that happiness, which you pray for in that which is to come, you have, Gentlemen, all my thanks and all my gratitude. I wish I could ensure them to you, and the State you represent, a hundred fold."

also of my family. She has been in an infirm condition for some time, and I had conceived that the connexion between them had ceased: but I am mistaken it seems they are both applying to get her here, and tho' I never wished to see her more, I cannot refuse his request (if it can be complied with on reasonable terms) as he has served me faithfully for many years.

After premising thus much, I have to beg the favor of you to procure her a passage to Alexanda., either by Sea, in the Stage, or in the passage boat from the head of Elk, as you shall think cheapest and best, and her situation will admit;—the cost of either I will pay. Her name is Margaret Thomas, allias Lee (the name by which *he* calls himself). She lives in Philada. with Isaac and Hannah Sile—black people, who are often employ'd by families in the city as cooks.

I am &c.[1]

TO JACOB READ.[2]

DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 11 August, 1784.

I return the letter you were so obliging as to send me, and thank you for the perusal of it. No copy has been taken; nor will any part of its contents transpire from me.

Although Mr. L——'s informant may have the means of acquiring knowledge, and though it is undoubted that the British cabinet wish to recover the United States to a dependence on that government,

[1] This William was "Billy," purchased by Washington of Mary Lee in 1768, for £68 15 *s*. He was the servant mentioned in the preface to the forged letters of 1776.

[2] A delegate in Congress from South Carolina.

yet I can scarce think they ever expect to see it realized, or that they have any plan in contemplation to try to effect it; unless *our* want of wisdom, and perseverance in error, should in their judgment render the attempt certain. The affairs of Ireland, if our accounts from thence are to be relied on, are in too turbulent a state to suffer Great Britain to enter very soon into another quarrel with America, even if her finances were on a more respectable footing, than I believe them to be; and her prospect of success must diminish as our population increases, and the government becomes more consistent; without the last of which, indeed, any thing may be apprehended. It is, however, as necessary for the sovereign in council, as it is for the general in the field, not to despise information, but to hear all, compare all, combine them with other circumstances and take measures accordingly. Nothing, I confess, would sooner induce me to give credit to a hostile intention on the part of Great Britain, than their continuing, (without the shadow of reason for I really see none,) to withhold the western posts on the American side the line from us, and sending, as the gazettes say is their intention, Sir Guy Carleton over as Viceroy to their possessions in America, which are to undergo a new organization.

The opinion I have here given, you will readily perceive is founded upon the ideas I entertain of the temper of Ireland, the imbecility of Great Britain, and her internal divisions; for with pain I add, that I think our affairs are under wretched management, and that our conduct, if Great Britain was in circumstances to take advantage of it, would bid her hope *every thing*,

while other powers might expect *little* from the wisdom or exertion of these States.

I thank you for your proffered services to the eastward. I have nothing to trouble you with, but wishing you may find the air of Rhode Island salubrious and beneficial to your mother, I have the honor to be, with great esteem, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

MOUNT VERNON, 20 August, 1784.

MY DEAR COUNT,

I thank you for your favor of the 16th of June by the Marquis de Lafayette, who arrived here three days ago; and for your other letter of the 4th of May, which also came safe.[1] Permit me to offer you my sincere congratulations on your appointment to the government of Picardy. It is an honorable testimony of the approbation of your Prince, and a just reward for your services and merit. Should fortune ever put it into my power to come to France, your being at Calais would be an irresistible inducement for me to make it a visit.

My letters from Philadelphia, public and private, would give you a full account of every matter and thing respecting the Society of the Cincinnati, and upon what footing all claims to the order were thereafter to be decided. To these referring, I shall save you the trouble of reading a repetition. Consider-

[1] Lafayette arrived at New York on the 4th of August, after a passage of thirty-four days from France. He remained a short time in New York, to receive the congratulations of the citizens, and also in Philadelphia, and then hastened forward to Mount Vernon, which place he reached on the 17th.

ing how recently the King of Sweden has changed the form of government of that country, it is not so much to be wondered at, that his *fears* should get the better of his liberality, at any thing which might have the semblance of republicanism; but when it is further considered, how few of his nation had, or could have a right to the order, I think he might have suffered his complaisance to overcome them.[1]

I will not trouble you with a long letter at this time, because I have nothing worthy of communication. Mrs. Washington, always pleased with your recollection of her, and glad to hear of your health, prays you to accept her compliments and best wishes. Mine are always sincere and offered (though unknown) to Madame de Rochambeau, the Viscount your son, and any of the officers of the army you commanded in America, whom you may see, and with whom I have the honor of an acquaintance. With great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[2]

[1] The King of Sweden had declined permitting the officers in the French army, who were his subjects, and who had been in America, to wear the order of the Cincinnati, on the ground that the institution had a republican tendency not suited to his government.

[2] General Washington left Mount Vernon on the 1st of September, on his tour to the western country, and was absent till the 4th of October, when he again reached home. The results of his observations during his tour will be found in his letter to Governor Harrison, which follows in the text.

It was his original purpose to go down the Ohio as far as the Great Kanawha, but he changed his design after arriving at the Monongahela, where he was informed of the disquietude of the Indians.

This tour was performed on horseback, and the whole distance travelled was six hundred and eighty miles. He crossed the mountains by the usual route of Braddock's Road, but returned through the wild and unsettled country, which is watered by the different branches of the Cheat River, and came into the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton. He kept a journal, in which were minutely recorded his conversations with every intelligent person whom he met, respect-

CERTIFICATE TO MR. JAMES RUMSEY.[1]

I have seen the model of Mr. Rumsey's Boats constructed to work against stream ; have examined the power upon which it acts ;—have been an eye witness to an actual experiment in running water of some rapidity ; & do give it as my opinion (altho' I had little faith before) that he has discovered the Art of propelling Boats, by mechanism & small manual assistance, against rapid currents ;—that the discovery is of vast importance—may be of the greatest usefulness in our inland navigation—&, if it succeeds, of which I have no doubt, that the value of it is greatly enhanced by the simplicity of the works, which when seen & explained to, might be executed by the most common mechanics.—

Given under my hand at the town of Bath, County of Berkeley in the State of Virga. this 7th day of September, 1784.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

MOUNT VERNON, 10 October, 1784.[2]

DEAR SIR,

Upon my return from the western country a few days ago, I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 17th ultimo. It has always been my intention to

ing the facilities for internal navigation afforded by the rivers which have their sources among the Alleghany Mountains, and flow thence either to the east or the west.

[1] Rumsey was at this time associated with Robert Throckmorton in keeping "a very commodious boarding-house at the sign of the Liberty Pole and Flag," Berkeley Springs.—*Maryland Gazette*, 13 June, 1784.

[2] Washington wrote letters to George Plater, of Maryland (25 October), and Jacob Read, of South Carolina (3 November), upon the same subject, and in much

pay my respects to you, before the chance of another *early and hard* winter should make a warm fireside too comfortable to be relinquished. And I shall feel an additional pleasure in offering this tribute of friendship and respect to you, by having the company of the Marquis de Lafayette, when he shall have revisited this place from his eastern tour, now every day to be expected.

I shall take the liberty now, my dear Sir, to suggest a matter, which would (if I am not too short-sighted a politician) mark your administration as an important era in the annals of this country, if it should be recommended by you and adopted by the Assembly.

It has long been my decided opinion, that the shortest, easiest, and least expensive communication with the invaluable and extensive country back of us would be by one or both of the rivers of this State, which have their sources in the Apalachian mountains. Nor am I singular in this opinion. Evans, in his Map and Analysis of the Middle Colonies, which, considering the early period at which they were given to the public, are done with amazing exactness, and Hutchins since, in his Topographical Description of the western coun-

the same language. I have noted a few variations and additions of interest, and printed in the proper place the views expressed to Read on other matters.

"My tour to the westward was less extensive than I intended. The Indians, from accounts, were in too dissatisfied a mood for me to expose myself to their insults, as I had no object in contemplation, which could warrant any risk. My property in that country having previously undergone every kind of attack and diminution, which the nature of it could admit, to see the condition of my lands, which were nearest and settled, and to dispose of those, which were more remote and unsettled, was all I had in view. The first I accomplished; the other I could not; and I returned three weeks sooner than I expected."—*From his letter to Jacob Read.*

try, (a good part of which is from actual surveys,) are decidedly of the same sentiments; as indeed are all others, who have had opportunities, and have been at the pains, to investigate and consider the subject.[1]

But that this may not now stand as mere matter of opinion or assertion, unsupported by facts (such at least as the best maps now extant, compared with the oral testimony, which my opportunities in the course of the war have enabled me to obtain), I shall give you the different routs and distances from Detroit, by which all the trade of the northwestern parts of the united territory must pass; unless the Spaniards, contrary to their present policy, should engage part of it, or the British should attempt to force nature, by carrying the trade of the Upper Lakes by the River Utawas into Canada, which I scarcely think they will or could effect.[2] Taking Detroit then (which is putting ourselves in as unfavorable a point of view as we can be well placed, because it is upon the line of the British territory,) as a point by which, as I have already observed, all that part of the trade must come, it appears from the statement enclosed, that the tide waters of this State are nearer to it by one hundred and sixty-eight miles, than that of the River St. Lawrence;

[1] "To describe the usefulness of water transportation would be a mere waste of time; every man who has considered the difference of expence between it and land transportation, and the prodigious saving in the article of draft cattle, requires no argument in proof of it. And to point out the advantages which the back inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland would derive from an extension of the inland navigation of the river Potomack, even supposing our views did not extend beyond the Appalachian mountains, would be equally nugatory."—*From his letter to Plater.*

[2] "As the Lakes are as open to our traders as theirs, and the way easier." *From his letter to Plater.*

or than that of the Hudson at Albany, by one hundred and seventy-six miles.

Maryland stands upon similar ground with Virginia. Pennsylvania, although the Susquehanna is an unfriendly water, much impeded, it is said, with rocks and rapids, and nowhere communicating with those, which lead to her capital, has it in contemplation to open a communication between Toby's Creek, which empties into the Allegany River ninety-five miles above Fort Pitt, and the west branch of Susquehanna, and to cut a canal between the waters of the latter and the Schuylkill; the expense of which is easier to be conceived, than estimated or described by me. A people, however, who are possessed of the spirit of commerce, who see and who will pursue their advantages, may achieve almost any thing. In the mean time, under the uncertainty of these undertakings, they are smoothing the roads and paving the ways for the trade of that western world. That New York will do the same so soon as the British garrisons are removed, which are at present insurmountable obstacles in *their* way, no person, who knows the temper, genius, and policy of those people as well as I do, can harbor the smallest doubt.[1]

[1] "Any more than they will of the difficulty of diverting trade after connections are once formed, and it has followed for any length of time in one channel, to that of another. I am not for *discouraging* the exertion of any State to draw the commerce of the western country to its sea ports. The more communications are opened to it, the closer we bind that rising world (for indeed it may be so called) to our interests, and the greater strength shall we acquire by it. Those to whom nature affords the best communication will, if they are wise and politic, enjoy the greatest share of the trade. All I would be understood to mean, therefore, is that the gifts of Providence may not be neglected or slighted."—*From his letter to Plater.*

Thus much with respect to rival States. Let me now take a short view of our own; and, being aware of the objections which are in the way, I will, in order to contrast them, enumerate them with the advantages.

The first and principal one is, the *unfortunate jealousy*, which ever has, and it is to be feared ever will prevail, lest one part of the State should obtain an advantage over the other parts, (as if the benefits of the trade were not diffusive and beneficial to all). Then follows a train of difficulties, namely, that our people are already heavily taxed; that we have no money; that the advantages of this trade are remote; that the most direct route for it is through other States, over whom we have no control; that the routes over which we have control are as distant as either of those which lead to Philadelphia, Albany, or Montreal; that a sufficient spirit of commerce does not pervade the citizens of this commonwealth; and that we are in fact doing for others, what they ought to do for themseles.

Without going into the investigation of a question, which has employed the pens of able politicians, namely, whether trade with foreigners is an advantage or disadvantage to a country, this State, as a part of the confederated States, all of whom have the spirit of it very strongly working within them, must adopt it, or submit to the evils arising therefrom without receiving its benefits. Common policy, therefore, points clearly and strongly to the propriety of our enjoying all the advantages, which nature and our local situation afford us; and evinces clearly, that, unless this spirit could be totally eradicated in other States as well as in this,

and every man be made to become either a cultivator of the land or a manufacturer of such articles as are prompted by necessity, such stimulus should be employed as will *force* this spirit, by showing to our countrymen the superior advantages we possess beyond others, and the importance of being upon a footing with our neighbors.

If this is fair reasoning, it ought to follow as a consequence, that we should do our part towards opening the communication with the fur and peltry trade of the Lakes, and for the produce of the country which lies within, and which will, so soon as matters are settled with the Indians, and the terms on which Congress mean to dispose of the land, found to be favorable, are announced, be settled faster than any other ever did, or any one would imagine. This, then, when considered in an interested point of view, is alone sufficient to excite our endeavors. But in my opinion there is a political consideration for so doing, which is of still greater importance.

I need not remark to you, Sir, that the flanks and rear of the United States are possessed by other powers, and formidable ones too; nor how necessary it is to apply the cement of interest to bind all parts of the Union together by indissoluble bonds, especially that part of it, which lies immediately west of us, with the middle States. For what ties, let me ask, should we have upon those people? How entirely unconnected with them shall we be, and what troubles may we not apprehend, if the Spaniards on their right, and Great Britain on their left, instead of throwing stum-

bling-blocks in their way, as they now do, should hold out lures for their trade and alliance? What, when they get strength, which will be sooner than most people conceive (from the emigration of foreigners, who will have no particular predilection towards us, as well as from the removal of our own citizens), will be the consequence of their having formed close connexions with both or either of those powers, in a commercial way? It needs not, in my opinion, the gift of prophecy to foretell.

The western settlers (I speak now from my own observation) stand as it were upon a pivot. The touch of a feather would turn them any way. They have looked down the Mississippi, until the Spaniards, very impoliticly I think for themselves, threw difficulties in their way; and they looked that way for no other reason, than because they could glide gently down the stream; without considering, perhaps, the difficulties of the voyage back again, and the time necessary to perform it in; and because they have no other means of coming to us but by long land transportations and unimproved roads.[1] These causes have hitherto checked the industry of

[1] In May, 1782, one Yoder floated down the Mississippi, sold his goods, and returned to the Falls of Ohio by way of Havanna, Philadelphia, and Pittsburg. —Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, II., 212.

Lafayette, upon the eve of embarking, wrote to Madison: "I have much conferred with the General upon the Potomac system. Many people think the navigation of the Mississippi is not an advantage, but it may be the excess of a very good thing, viz: the opening of your rivers. I fancy it has not changed your opinion, but beg you will write me on the subject; in the meanwhile I hope Congress will act coolly and prudently by Spain, who is such a fool that allowances should be made." Madison could "not believe that many minds are tainted with so illiberal and short sighted a policy," and replied at length on March 20th, 1785.—*Writings of Madison*, 136.

the present settlers; for, except the demand for provisions, occasioned by the increase of population, and a little flour, which the necessities of the Spaniards compel them to buy, they have no incitements to labor. But smooth the road, and make easy the way for them, and then see what an influx of articles will be poured upon us; how amazingly our exports will be increased by them, and how amply we shall be compensated for any trouble and expense we may encounter to effect it.

A combination of circumstances makes the present conjuncture more favorable for Virginia, than for any other State in the Union, to fix these matters. The jealous and untoward disposition of the Spaniards on one hand, and the private views of some individuals, coinciding with the general policy of the court of Great Britain on the other, to retain as long as possible the posts of Detroit, Niagara, and Oswego, &c., (which, though done under the letter of the treaty, is certainly an infraction of the spirit of it, and injurious to the Union,) may be improved to the greatest advantage by this State, if she would open the avenues to the trade of that country, and embrace the present moment to establish it. It only wants a beginning. The western inhabitants would do their part towards its execution. Weak as they are, they would meet us at least half way, rather than be driven into the arms of or be made dependent upon foreigners; which would eventually either bring on a separation of them from us, or a war between the United States and one or the other of those powers, most probably with the Spaniards.

The preliminary steps to the attainment of this great object would be attended with very little expense, and might at the same time that it served to attract the attention of the western country, and to convince the wavering inhabitants of our disposition to connect ourselves with them, and to facilitate their commerce with us, be a mean of removing those jealousies, which otherwise might take place among ourselves.

These, in my opinion, are to appoint commissioners, who, from their situation, integrity, and abilities, can be under no suspicion of prejudice or predilection to one part more than to another. Let these commissioners make an actual survey of James River and Potomac from tide-water to their respective sources; note with great accuracy the kind of navigation and the obstructions in it, the difficulty and expense attending the removal of these obstructions, the distances from place to place through their whole extent, and the nearest and best portages between these waters and the streams capable of improvement, which run into the Ohio; traverse these in like manner to their junction with the Ohio, and with equal accuracy. The navigation of this river (i. e., the Ohio) being well known, they will have less to do in the examination of it; but, nevertheless, let the courses and distances be taken to the mouth of the Muskingum, and up that river (notwithstanding it is in the ceded lands) to the carrying-place to the Cayahoga; down the Cayahoga to Lake Erie; and thence to Detroit. Let them do the same with Big Beaver Creek, although

part of it is in the State of Pennsylvania; and with the Scioto also. In a word, let the waters east and west of the Ohio, which invite our notice by their proximity, and by the ease with which land transportation may be had between them and the Lakes on one side, and the Rivers Potomac and James on the other, be explored, accurately delineated, and a correct and connected map of the whole be presented to the public. These things being done, I shall be mistaken if prejudice does not yield to facts, jealousy to candor, and, finally, if reason and nature, thus aided, will not dictate what is right and proper to be done.

In the mean while, if it should be thought that the lapse of time, which is necessary to effect this work, may be attended with injurious consequences, could not there be a sum of money granted towards opening the best, or, if it should be deemed more eligible, two of the nearest communications (one to the northward and another to the southward) with the settlements to the westward; and an act be passed, if there should not appear a manifest disposition in the Assembly to make it a public undertaking, to incorporate and encourage private adventurers, if any should associate and solicit the same, for the purpose of extending the navigation of the Potomac or James River; and, in the former case, to request the concurrence of Maryland in the measure? It will appear from my statement of the different routes (and, as far as my means of information have extended, I have done it with the utmost candor), that all the produce of the settlements about Fort Pitt can be brought to Alexan-

dria by the Youghiogany in three hundred and four miles, whereof only thirty-one is land transportation; and by the Monongahela and Cheat Rivers in three hundred and sixty miles, twenty of which only are land carriage. Whereas the common road from Fort Pitt to Philadelphia is three hundred and twenty miles, all land transportation; or four hundred and seventy-six miles, if the Ohio, Toby's Creek, Susquehanna, and Schuylkill are made use of for this purpose. How much of this is by land, I know not; but, from the nature of the country, it must be very considerable. How much the interest and feelings of people thus circumstanced would be engaged to promote it, requires no illustration.

For my own part, I think it highly probable, that, upon the strictest scrutiny, if the Falls of the Great Kanhawa can be made navigable, or a short portage be had there, it will be found of equal importance and convenience to improve the navigation of both the James and Potomac. The latter, I am fully persuaded, affords the nearest communication with the Lakes; but James River may be more convenient for all the settlers below the mouth of the Great Kanhawa, and for some distance perhaps above and west of it; for I have no expectation, that any part of the trade above the Falls of the Ohio will go down that river and the Mississippi, much less that the returns will ever come up them, unless our want of foresight and good management is the occasion of it. Or, upon trial, if it should be found that these rivers, from the beforementioned Falls, will admit the descent of sea-vessels,

in which case, and the navigation of the former's becoming free, it is probable that both vessels and cargoes will be carried to foreign markets and sold; but the returns for them will never in the natural course of things ascend the long and rapid current of that river, which with the Ohio to the Falls, in their meanderings, is little if any short of two thousand miles. Upon the whole, the object in my estimation is of vast commercial and political importance. In these lights I think posterity will consider it, and regret, (if our conduct should give them cause,) that the present favorable moment to secure so great a blessing for them was neglected.

One thing more remains, which I had like to have forgot, and that is, the supposed difficulty of obtaining a passage through the State of Pennsylvania. How an application to its legislature would be relished, in the first instance, I will not undertake to decide; but of one thing I am almost certain, such an application would place that body in a very delicate situation. There is in the State of Pennsylvania at least one hundred thousand souls west of Laurel Hill, who are groaning under the inconveniences of a long land transportation. They are wishing, indeed they are looking, for the improvement and extension of inland navigation; and, if this cannot be made easy for them to Philadelphia (at any rate it must be lengthy), they will seek a mart elsewhere; the consequence of which would be, that the State, though contrary to the interests of its sea-ports, must submit to the loss of so much of its trade, or hazard not only the loss of the

trade but the loss of the settlement also; for an opposition on the part of government to the extension of water transportation, so consonant with the essential interests of a large body of people, or any extraordinary impositions upon the exports or imports to or from another State, would ultimately bring on a separation between its eastern and western settlements; towards which there is not wanting a disposition at this moment in that part of it beyond the mountains. I consider Rumsey's discovery for working boats against stream, by mechanical powers (principally), as not only a very fortunate invention for these States in general, but as one of those circumstances, which have combined to render the present epocha favorable above all others for fixing, if we are disposed to avail ourselves of them, a large portion of the trade of the western country in the bosom of this State irrevocably.

Long as this letter is, I intended to have written a fuller and more digested one, upon this important subject; but have met with so many interruptions since my return home, as almost to have precluded my writing at all. What I now give is crude; but if you are in sentiment with me, I have said enough; if there is not an accordance of opinion, I have said too much; and all I pray in the latter case is, that you will do me the justice to believe my motives are pure, however erroneous my judgment may be in this matter, and that I am, with the most perfect esteem and friendship,

Dear Sir, yours, &c.[1]

[1] Governor Harrison replied: "I was in great hopes of seeing you here before this, that I might acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 10th of

TO JACOB READ.

MOUNT VERNON, 3 November, 1784.

SIR

* * * What may be the result of the Indian treaty I know not; equally unacquainted am I with the instructions or powers given to the Commissioners:—

last month in person, and tell you how much I approve of your plan for opening the navigation of the western waters. The letter was so much more explicit than I could be, that I took the liberty to lay it before the Assembly, who appear so impressed with the utility of the measure, that I dare say they will order the survey you propose immediately, and will at their next sitting proceed to carry the plan into execution."—Richmond, November 13th.

When Washington went to Richmond to meet the Marquis de Lafayette, 15 November, 1784, he conferred with some members of the Assembly on the subject, and then accompanied the Marquis to Annapolis. To Madison and Joseph Jones he wrote from Mount Vernon on the 28th: "In one word, it should seem to me, that if the public cannot take it up with efficient funds, and without those delays which might be involved by a limping conduct, it had better be placed in the hands of a corporate company."

Madison has fully recorded the subsequent steps, in a letter to Jefferson, dated 9 January, 1785:

"Shortly after his [Washington's] departure, a joint memorial from a number of Citizens of Virginia and Maryland, interested in the Potomac, was presented to the Assembly, stating the practicability and importance of the work, and praying for an act of incorporation, and grant of perpetual toll to the undertaking of it. A bill had been prepared at the same meeting which produced the memorial, and was transmitted to Richmond at the same time. A like memorial and bill went to Annapolis, where the Legislature of Maryland was sitting.

"The Assembly here lent a ready ear to the project; but a difficulty arose from the height of the tolls proposed, the danger of destroying the uniformity essential in the proceedings of the two States by altering them, and the scarcity of time for negociating with Maryland a bill satisfactory to both States. Short as the time was, however, the attempt was decided on, and the negociation committed to General Washington himself. General Gates, who happened to be in the way, and Col. Blackburn, were associated with him. The latter did not act; the two former pushed immediately to Annapolis, where the sickness of General Gates threw the whole agency on General Washington. By his exertions, in concert with Committees of the two branches of the Legislature, an amendment of the plan was digested in a few days, passed through both houses in one day, with nine dissenting voices only, and dispatched for Richmond,

but if a large cession of territory is expected from them, a disappointment I think will ensue; for the Indians, I have been told, will not yield to the proposal. Nor can I see wherein lies the advantages of it, if they would at a first purchase, unless a *number* of States, tho' thinly inhabited would be *more* than a counterpoize in the *political scale*, for progressive and compact settlements. Such is the rage for speculat-

where it arrrived just in time for the close of the Session. A corresponding act was immediately introduced, and passed without opposition.

"The scheme declares that the subscribers shall be an incorporated body; that there shall be 500 shares, amounting to about 220,000 dollars, of which the States of Virginia and Maryland are each to take 50 shares; that the tolls shall be collected in three portions, at the three principal falls, and with the works vest as real estate in the members of the Company; and that the works shall be begun within one year and finished within ten years, under the penalty of entire forfeiture.

"Previous to the receipt of the act from Annapolis, a bill on a different plan had been brought in and proceeded on for clearing James River. It proposed that the subscriptions should be taken by Trustees, and, under their management, solemnly appropriated to the object in view; that they should be regarded as a loan to the State, should bear an interest of 10 per cent and should entitle the subscriber to the double of the principal remaining undischarged at the end of a moderate period; and that the tolls to be collected shall stand inviolably pledged for both principal and interest. It was thought better for the public to present this exuberant harvest to the subscribers than to grant them a perpetuity in the tolls. In the case of the Potomac, which depended on another authority as well as our own, we were less at liberty to consider what would be best in itself. Exuberant, however, as the harvest appeared, it was pronounced by good judges an inadequate bait for subscriptions, even from those otherwise interested in the work, and on the arrival and acceptance of the Potomac plan, it was found advisable to pass a similar one in favor of James River. The circumstantial variations in the latter are: 1. The sum to be aimed at in the first instance is 100,000 Dollars only. 2. The shares, which are the same in number with those of Potomac, are reduced to 200 Dollars each, and the number of public shares raised to 100. 3. The tolls are reduced to half of the aggregate of the Potomac tolls. 4. In case the falls at this place, where alone tolls are to be paid, shall be first opened, the Company are permitted to receive the tolls immediately, and continue to do so till the lapse of

ing in, and forestalling of lands on the No. West of the Ohio, that scarce a valuable spot, within any tolerable distance of it, is left without a claimant. Men in these times talk with as much facility of fifty, an hundred, and even 500,000 Acres, as a gentleman formerly would do of 1,000. In defiance of the proclamation of Congress, they roam over the country on the Indian side of the Ohio—mark out

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ten years, within which the whole river is to be made navigable. 5. A right of pre-emption is reserved to the public on all transfers of shares. These acts are very lengthy, and having passed in all the precipitancy which marks the concluding stages of a session, abound, I fear, with inaccuracies.

"In addition to these acts, joint resolutions have passed the Legislatures of Maryland and Virginia for clearing a road from the head of the Potomac navigation to Cheat river, or if necessary to Monongalia, and 3,333⅓ dollars are voted for the work by each State. Pennsylvania is also to be applied to by the Governors of the two States for leave to clear a road through her jurisdiction, if it should be found necessary, from Potomac to Yohogania; to which the Assembly here have added a proposition to unite with Maryland in representing to Pennsylvania the advantages which will accrue on a part of her citizens from opening the proposed communication with the Sea, and the reasonableness of her securing to those who are to be at the expense the use of her waters as a thoroughfare to and from the Country beyond her limits, free from all imposts and restrictions whatever, and as a channel of trade with her citizens, free from greater imposts than may be levied on any other channel of importation. This resolution did not pass till it was too late to refer it to General Washington's negociations with Maryland. It now makes a part of the task alloted to the Commissioners who are to settle with Maryland the jurisdiction and navigation of Potomac, below tide water. By another Resolution of this State, persons are to be forthwith appointed by the Executive to survey the upper parts of James River, the country through which a road must pass to the navigable waters of New River. and these waters down to the Ohio. I am told by a member of the Assembly, who seems to be well acquainted both with the intermediate ground and with the western waters in question, that a road of 25 or 30 miles in length will link these waters with James River, and will strike a branch of the former which yields a fine navigation, and falls into the main stream of the Kenhawa below the only obstructions lying in this river down to the Ohio. If these be facts James River will have a great superiority over Potomac, the road from which to Cheat river is, indeed, computed by General

Lands, survey and even settle on them. This gives great discontent to the Indians, and will, unless measures are taken in time to prevent it, inevitably produce a war with the western tribes. To avoid which there appears to me to be only these ways. Purchase if possible as much land of them immediately back of us, as would make one or two States, according to the extent Congress design, or would

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Washington at 20 miles only, but he thinks the expence of making the latter navigable will require a continuation of the road to Monongalia, which will lengthen it to forty miles. The road to Yohogania is computed by the General at 30 miles.

"By another resolution, commissioners are to be appointed to survey the ground for a canal between the waters of Elizabeth river and those of North Carolina, and in case the best course for such a canal shall require the concurrence of that State, to concert a joint plan and report the same to the next session of Assembly. Besides the trade which will flow through this channel from North Carolina to Norfolk, the large district of Virginia watered by the Roanoake will be doubled in its value by it.

"The Treasurer is by this act directed to subscribe 50 shares in the Potomac and 100 shares in the James River companies, which shall vest in General Washington and his heirs. This mode of adding some substantial to the many rewards bestowed on him was deemed least injurious to his delicacy, as well as least dangerous as a precedent. It was submitted in place of a direct pension, urged on the House by the indiscreet zeal of some of his friends. Though it will not be an equivalent succor in all respects, it will save the General from subscriptions which would have oppressed his finances; and if the schemes be executed within the period fixed, may yield a revenue for some years before the term of his. At all events, it will demonstrate the grateful wishes of his Country, and will promote the object which he has so much at heart. The earnestness with which he espouses the undertaking is hardly to be described, and shews that a mind like his, capable of great views, and which has long been occupied with them, cannot bear a vacancy; and surely he could not have chosen an occupation more worthy of succeeding to that of establishing the political rights of his Country than the patronage of works for the extensive and lasting improvement of its natural advantages; works which will be double the value of half the lands within the Commonwealth, will extend its commerce, link with its interests those of the Western States, and lessen the emigration of its citizens by enhancing the profitableness of situations which they now desert in search of better."

wish to have them of, and which may be fully adequate to all our present purposes—fix such a price upon the lands so purchased, as would not be too exorbitant and burthensome for real occupiers; but high enough to discourage monopolizers. Declare all steps heretofore taken to procure land on the northwest side of the Ohio, contrary to the prohibition of Congress, to be null and void—and that any person thereafter, who shall presume to mark, survey, or settle on lands beyond the limit of the new States, or purchased lands, shall not only be considered as outlaws, but fit subjects for Indian vengeance.

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If these or similar measures are adopted, I have no doubt of Congress's deriving a very considerable revenue from the western territory. But lands, like other commodities rise or fall in proportion to the quantity at market; consequently, a higher price may be obtained by the acre, for as much as will constitute one or two States, than can be had if ten States were offered for sale at the same time—besides extending the benefits, and deriving all the advantages of law and government from them at once, neither of which can be done in sparse settlements, where nothing is thought of but scrambling for land, which may involve confusion and bloodshed.

It is much to be regretted, that the slow determinations of Congress involve many evils—'tis much easier to avoid mischiefs than to apply remedies when they have happened. Had Congress paid an earlier attention to, or decided sooner on Indian affairs, matters would have been in a more favorable train than they

now are; and if they are longer delayed, they will grow worse. Twelve months ago the Indians would have listened to propositions of any kind with more readiness than they will do now:—the terms of the peace frightened them, and they were disgusted with G. B. for making such. Bribery, and every address which British art could dictate have been practised since to soothe them, to estrange them from us, and to secure their trade. To what other causes can be ascribed their holding our western posts so long after the ratifications of the treaty, contrary to the spirit, tho' they do it under the letter of it. To remove their garrison and stores cannot be the work of a week; for if report is true, they have only to shift them to the opposite side of the line. But it is now more than twelve months since I foretold what has happened, and I shall not be surprized if they leave us *no Posts* to occupy; for if they *mean* to surrender them *at all*, they may fix upon a season, or appoint a short day perhaps for the evacuation when no relief can be had. And Congress having repeatedly called for an evacuation, will hardly know how to act, especially as they will be in no condition to take possession of the posts:—for to do it properly requires time; as ordnance, stores, provisions and other articles, as well as garrisons are not to be established in a moment, even where boats and other conveniences, of which I question much whether you have any, are at hand. This being the case, there will be an interregnum during which the works will be left without guards; and being obnoxious to our late enemy,

now no doubt staunch friends with Indian prejudices in aid, will be the cause of *accidental* fires, or Indian drunkenness, in which the whole will end in conflagration, or, I shall be mistaken. * * *

TO GEORGE CLINTON, GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.

MOUNT VERNON, 25 November, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

A few days ago I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 12th instant. Although I felt pain from your silence, I should have imputed that silence to any cause, rather than a diminution of friendship. I feel this passion for you too strongly implanted in my own breast, to harbor a suspicion of it in yours, where I flatter myself it is reciprocal, unless I had done something to deserve it, of which I am not conscious.

It gives me great pleasure to learn from yourself, that the State over which you preside is tranquil. Would to God it may ever remain so, and that all others may follow the example. Internal dissensions, and jarring with our neighbors, are not only productive of mischievous consequences as it respects ourselves, but have a tendency to lessen our national character and importance in the eyes of European powers. If any thing can, this will, expose us to their intriguing politics, and may shake the Union.

It has been my avowed and uniform opinion, ever since the interview between Baron de Steuben and General Haldimand last year, that, whilst a pretext

could be found, the western posts would be withheld from us; and I do not think I should hazard a false prediction, were I to add, that they never will come into our hands in the condition they now are. When pretexts can no longer put on the garb of decency, a season may be named for the surrender, in which it would be impracticable for us to avail ourselves; and the Indians during the interregnum by innuendos may reduce them to ashes. I wish it may be otherwise, but these are my opinions.

It gave pain to Mrs. Washington and myself to hear of Mrs. Clinton's indisposition, and the sickness and accidents with which your little flock have been afflicted. Our best and sincere wishes are offered for them, and we hope shortly to hear of their perfect restoration, as we have a most affectionate regard for them all, and feel ourselves interested in every thing which concerns them.

I am sorry we have been disappointed in our expectation of the mineral spring at Saratoga; and of the purchase of that part of the Oriskany tract, on which Fort Schuyler stands; but very glad you have succeeded upon such advantageous terms in the purchase of six thousand acres adjoining; for you certainly have obtained it amazingly cheap. Be so good, my dear Sir, along with the other information you have kindly promised me, to signify whether you have any prospect of borrowing, on interest, money for the payment of my moiety, as was talked of between us, or whether I am to provide it in any other manner, that I may take measures accordingly. The time is also come for the payment of interest due

on the old score, and I shall do it with as little delay as possible.

Give me leave now, my dear Sir, to thank you for your recollection of and attention to the small articles, which I prayed you to provide for me. Whenever you conceive the season is proper, and an opportunity offers, I shall hope to receive the balsam trees, or any others, which you may think curious and exotics with us, as I am endeavoring to improve the grounds about my house in this way. If perchance the sloop Pilgrim is not yet sailed from your port, you would add to the favor you mean to confer on me, by causing a number of grape vines, sent to me by an uncle of the Chevalier de la Luzerne, brought over by Captain Williams, and deposited by him in the garden of Mr. Beekman near the city of New York, to be forwarded by that vessel. They consist of a variety of the most valuable eating grapes in France. A list of the kinds, and the distinctions of them, no doubt accompanied them. I pray you to take some of each sort for your own use, and offer some to Mr. Beekman.

I thank you for the interest you take in the welfare of my nephew, and for his letter, which you were so obliging as to send me. Poor fellow! his pursuit after health is, I fear, altogether fruitless. Ever since the month of May he has been traversing the seas from island to island, but hitherto to very little effect. When he last wrote, he was about to sail for Charleston, where he proposed to spend the winter, and, if no salutary effects should be derived from it, to come hither in the spring and resign himself to his fate.[1]

[1] George Augustine Washington.

Mrs. Washington unites in affectionate regards for you, Mrs. Clinton, and family; and with every sentiment of friendship and respect, I am, &c.

P. S. Tell Walker, that Mrs. Washington and I join in congratulating with him on his matrimonial connexion, and hope he will enjoy all the comforts and pleasures, which are to be derived from a *good* wife.[1]

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[2]

MOUNT VERNON, 14 December, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The letter, which you did me the honor to write to me on the 20th of last month, only came to my hands by the post preceding the date of this. For the copy

[1] The next morning the House of Assembly passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, that, as a mark of their reverence for his character, and affection for his person, a committee of five members be appointed to wait upon him with the respectful regards of this House; to express to him the satisfaction they feel in the opportunity afforded by his presence, of offering this tribute to his merit; and to assure him, that, as they not only retain the most lasting impressions of the transcendent services rendered in his late public character, but have since his return to private life experienced proofs, that no change of situation can turn his thoughts from the welfare of his country, so his happiness can never cease to be an object of their most devout wishes and fervent supplications.

"Mr. Henry, Mr. Madison, Mr. Jones, Mr. C. H. Harrison, and Mr. Carrington are appointed a committee."

To the committee of five members, who were the bearers of this resolve, and of whom Patrick Henry was chairman, General Washington replied:

"My sensibility is deeply affected by this distinguished mark of the affectionate regard of your honorable House. I lament, on this occasion, the want of those powers which would enable me to do justice to my feelings, and shall rely upon your indulgent report to supply the defect; at the same time I pray you to present, for me, the strongest assurances of unalterable affection and gratitude, for this last pleasing and flattering attention of my country."

[2] Mr. Lee had been chosen President of Congress on the 30th of November.

of the treaty held with the Six Nations, at Fort Stanwix, you will please to accept my thanks. These people have given, I think, all that the United States could reasonably have required of them; more, perhaps, than the State of New York conceives ought to have been asked from them, by any other than their own legislature.

I wish they were better satisfied. Individual States opposing the measures of the United States, encroaching upon the territory of each other, and setting up old and obsolete claims, is verifying the predictions of our enemies, and is truly unfortunate. If the western tribes are as well disposed to treat with us as the Six Nations have been, and will cede a competent district of country northwest of the Ohio to answer our present purposes, it would be a circumstance as unexpected as pleasing to me; for it was apprehended, that they should agree to the latter reluctantly if at all; but the example of the Northern Indians, who, (if they have not relinquished their claim,) have pretensions to a large part of those lands, may have a powerful influence on the western gentry, and smooth the way for the commissioners, who have proceeded to Cayahoga.[1]

[1] The commissioners, Wolcott, Lee, and Butler, came to Fort Stanwix and found Lafayette already there. On a suggestion, and after some bickering, the Marquis made a speech to the Indians, and was, during his stay, of more importance to them than the commissioners, which gave umbrage to Arthur Lee. Madison, who was also present, details the matter, and hints that the commissioners were embarrassed by their instructions, "which left them no space for negotiation or concession." They were also impeded by the independent negotiations of New York with the Indians. "The Governor of this State not only attempted to hold a treaty before and separate from that of the U. S., but has absolutely done all in his power to frustrate ours."—*Arthur Lee to*

It gave me pleasure to find, by the last gazettes, that a sufficient number of States had assembled to form a Congress, and that you were chosen to preside in it.[1] On this event, permit me to offer my compliments of congratulation. To whatever causes the delay of this meeting may have been ascribed, it most certainly has an unfavorable aspect; contributes to lessen, already too low, the dignity and importance of the federal government, and is hurtful to our national character in the eyes of Europe.

It is said (I do not know how founded), that our Assembly have repealed their former act respecting British debts. If this be true, and the State of New York has not acted repugnantly to the terms of the treaty, the British government can no longer hold the western posts under that cover; but I shall be mistaken if they do not entrench themselves behind some other

Jacob Read, 29 October, 1784. In one of Washington's letters, it is hinted, that the negotiations were fruitless, as the deputies on the part of the Indians were not properly authorized to treat—an error, perhaps, for deputies of Congress. For it led him to add: "Certain it is in my opinion that there is a kind of fatality attending all our public measures. Inconceivable delays, particular states counteracting the plans of the United States when submitted to them, opposing each other upon all occasions, torn by internal disputes, or supinely negligent and inattentive to every thing which is not local and self-interesting, and very often short sighted in these,—make up our system of conduct. Would to God our own countrymen, who are entrusted with the management of the political machine, could view things by that large and extensive scale upon which it is measured by foreigners, and by the statesmen of Europe, who see what we might be and predict what we shall come to. In fact, our federal government is a name without substance. No state is longer bound by its edicts than it suits *present* purposes, without looking to the Consequences. How then can we fail in a little time becoming the sport of European politics, and the victims of our own policy."—*To Knox*, 5 November, 1784.

[1] Although Congress was to have assembled October 30th, it was not organized until November 30th.

expedient to effect it, or will appoint a time for surrendering them, of which we cannot avail ourselves; the probable consequence of which will be the destruction of the works.[1]

The Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have now under consideration the extension of the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James, and opening a communication between them and the western waters. They seem fully impressed with the

[1] In December, 1783, the Virginia Assembly revived two acts passed during the war, which suspended all voluntary and fraudulent assignments of debt, and as to others, allowed real and personal property to be tendered in discharge of executions. Joseph Jones, deeming speedy payment of the debts due to British creditors impracticable, wished to make periodical payments of the principal, though, with Jefferson, of the opinion that the treaty subjected debtors to the payment of interest also.—*Jones to Jefferson*, 28 February, 1784. In June, 1784, the courts were to be opened to British suits only when reparation should have been made for negroes carried off by the British. The minority of the State Senate protested against this measure, and it was admitted that a large majority of the people condemned it, either from a sense of justice or national faith.—*Madison to Jefferson*, 3 July and 20 August, 1784. In November the proposition of Mr. Jones passed in committee by a large majority, disallowing the interest, and it was to this bill, as yet not a law, that Washington referred. After discussing the terms of payment, the measure went to the Senate, where some discriminations were inserted; it was, in a committee of conference, made acceptable to both Houses, but its final acceptance was prevented by the adjournment of the Assembly.—*Madison to Jefferson*, 9 January, 1785.

In March, 1783, New York passed an act declaring that in any action by the proprietor of a house or tenement against the occupant, no military order should be a justification. It was on this law that the case of Rutgers *vs.* Waddington was tried. In May, 1784, a law was passed confirming in express terms all confiscations before made, notwithstanding errors in the proceedings, and taking away the writ of error upon any judgment previously rendered. This act, passed when the feeling was strongly aroused over the British retention of the posts, was, in Hamilton's opinion, a new confiscation, and involved an infraction of the treaty.—*Hamilton's Works* (Lodge), iv., 408. It may be noted that Hamilton believed that "it was not till about May, 1784, that we can charge upon Great Britain a delinquency as to the surrender of the posts."

political as well as the commercial advantages, which would result from the accomplishment of these great objects, and I hope will embrace the present moment to put them in train for speedy execution. Would it not, at the same time, be worthy of the wisdom and attention of Congress to have the western waters well explored, the navigation of them fully ascertained, accurately laid down, and a complete and perfect map made of the country; at least as far westwardly as the Miamies, running into the Ohio and Lake Erie, and to see how the waters of them communicate with the River St. Joseph, which empties into the Lake Michigan, and with the Wabash. I cannot forbear observing here that the Miami village, in Hutchins's map, if it and the waters here mentioned are laid down with any degree of accuracy, points to a very important post for the Union. The expense attending the undertaking could not be great, the advantages would be unbounded; for sure I am, nature has made such a display of her bounties in those regions, that the more the country is explored, the more it will rise in estimation, consequently the greater will the revenue be to the Union.

Would there be any impropriety, do you think, Sir, in reserving for special sale all mines, minerals, and salt springs, in the general grants of land belonging to the United States? The public, instead of the few knowing ones, might in this case receive the benefits, which would result from the sale of them, without infringing any rule of justice that occurs to me, or their own laws; but, on the contrary, inflict a just

punishment upon those, who in defiance of the latter have dared to create enemies & to disturb the public tranquillity, by roaming over the country, marking and surveying the valuable spots in it, to the great disquiet of the western tribes of Indians, who have viewed these transactions with jealous indignation. To hit upon a happy medium price for the western lands, for the prevention of monopoly on one hand, and not discouraging useful settlers on the other, will, no doubt, require consideration; but should not employ too much time before it is announced. The spirit for emigration is great. People have got impatient, and, though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either. It is easier to prevent than to remedy an evil. I shall be very happy in the continuation of your correspondence; and, with sentiments of great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

MOUNT VERNON, 5 January, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR,

About the beginning of last month I wrote you a pretty long letter, and soon after, received your favor of the 23d. of November. It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or add ought to my perplexity. I receive them with pleasure, and pay as much attention to them as my avocations will admit.

It is references of old matters with which I have nothing to do—applications, which oftentimes cannot be complied with; enquiries, which would employ the pen of a historian to satisfy; letters of compliment, as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business, which employs my pen and my time;—often disagreeably.

Indeed, these with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, may be productive of disagreeable consequences. I already begin to feel the effect.—Heavy, and painful oppression of the head, and other disagreeable sensations, often trouble me.—I am determined therefore to employ some person who shall ease me of the drudgery of this business.—At *any rate*, if the whole of it is thereby suspended, I am resolved to use exercise. My private concerns also, require infinitely more attention than I have given, or can give, under present circumstances. They can no longer be neglected without involving my ruin. This, my dear Sir, is a friendly communication—I give it in testimony of my unreservedness with you, and not for the purpose of discouraging your letters; for be assured that, to corrispond with those I love is among my highest gratifications, and I persuade myself you will not doubt my sincerity when I assure you I place you among the foremost of this class. Letters of friendship require no study, the communications are easy, and allowances are expected, and made. This is not the case with those which require re-searches, consid-

eration, recollection, and the de—l knows what to prevent error, and to answer the ends for which they are written.

In my last I informed you that I was endeavoring to stimulate my Countrymen to the extension of the inland Navigation of our Rivers; and to the opening of the best and easiest communication for Land transportation between them and the Western Waters. I am just returned from Annapolis to which place I was requested to go by our Assembly (with my bosom friend Genl. G—tes, who being at Richmond contrived to edge himself into the commission) for the purpose of arranging matters, and forming a Law which should be similar in both States, so far as it respected the river Potomack, which seperates them. I met the most perfect accordance in that legislature; and the matter is now reported to ours, for its concurrence.

The two Assemblies (not being in circumstances to undertake this business *wholly* at the public expence) propose to incorporate such private Adventurers as shall associate for the purpose of extending the navigation of the River from tide water as far up as it will admit craft of ten tons burthen, and to allow them a perpetual toll and other emoluments to induce them to subscribe freely to a work of such magnitude; whilst they have agreed (or, I should rather say, probably will agree, as the matter is not yet concluded in the Virginia Assembly) to open at the public expence, the communication with the Western territory. To do this will be a great political work—may be im-

mensely extensive in a commercial point; and beyond all question, will be exceedingly beneficial for those who advance the money for the purpose of extending the Navigation of the river, as the tolls arising therefrom are to be held in perpetuity, and will increase every year.—

Rents have got to such an amazing height in Alexandria, that (having an unimproved lot or two there) I have thoughts, if my finances will support me in the measure, of building a House, or Houses thereon for the purpose of letting.

In humble imitation of the wise man, I have set me down to count the cost; and among other heavy articles of expenditure, I find lime is not the smallest.

Stone lime with us, owing to the length of (land) transportation comes very high at that place. Shell lime, from its weakness, and the consequent quantity used, is far from being low. These considerations added to a report that this article may be had from your State by way of Ballast, upon terms much easier than either can be bought here, inclines me without making an apology, to give you the trouble of enquiring from those who might be disposed to enter into a contract therefor, and can ascertain the fact with precision.

1st.—At what price by the bushel, a quantity of slaked stone lime could be delivered at one of the wharves at Alexandria (freight and every incidental charge included), or to a Lighter opposite to my own House.

2d.—At what price burnt lime stone, but unslaked (if it be safe to bring such) could be delivered as above.

3d.—At what price unburnt lime stone, could be delivered at the latter place.

In the last case, it might I should suppose, come as Ballast very low. In the second it might also come as ballast, and (tho' higher than the former, yet) comparatively cheap, if the danger of waters getting to it, and its slaking and heating in the Hold, would not be too great.—In the first case, there would be no certainty of its goodness, because lime from the late judicious experiments of a Mr. Higgens, should be used as soon as it slaked; and would be still better, if it was so, immediately after burning; as air, as well as water, according to his observations, weakens and injures it. Your information upon these points from those who might incline to contract, and on whom dependence could be placed, would much oblige me—and the sooner I get it the better, as my determination is suspended. * * *

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

MOUNT VERNON, 22 January, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is not easy for me to decide by which my mind was most affected upon the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, surprise or gratitude.[1] Both were

[1] *From Mr. Harrison's Letter.*—"It gives megre at pleasure to inform you, that the Assembly yesterday, without a dissenting voice, complimented you with fifty shares in the Potomac Company, and one hundred in the James River

greater than I have words to express. The attention and good wishes, which the Assembly have evidenced by their act for vesting in me one hundred and fifty shares in the navigation of each of the rivers Potomac and James, are more than mere compliment. There is an unequivocal and substantial meaning annexed. But believe me, Sir, notwithstanding these, no circumstance has happened to me since I left the walks of public life, which has so much embarrassed me.

On the one hand, I consider this act, as I have already observed, as a noble and unequivocal proof of the good opinion, the affection, and disposition of my country to serve me; and I should be hurt, if, by declining the acceptance of it, my refusal should be construed into disrespect or the smallest slight upon the generous intention of the country, or it should be thought that an ostentatious display of disinterestedness or public virtue was the source of refusal. On the other hand, it is really my wish to have my mind, and my actions,

Company; of which I give you this early notice to stop your subscribing on your own account. As this compliment is intended by your country in commemoration of your assiduous cares to promote her interest, I hope you will have no scruples in accepting the present, and thereby gratifying them in their most earnest wishes."—Richmond, January 6th.

The preamble to the act expresses the object of the legislature in making the donation. It runs thus. "It is the desire of the representatives of this commonwealth to embrace every suitable occasion of testifying their sense of the unexampled merits of George Washington towards his country; and it is their wish in particular, that those great works for its improvement, which, both as springing from the liberty which he has been so instrumental in establishing, and as encouraged by his patronage, will be durable monuments of his glory, may be made monuments also of the gratitude of his country." The act then proceeds to vest in George Washington, and his heirs and assigns for ever, the above one hundred and fifty shares in the Potomac and James River Companies.—*Hening's Statutes*, vol. xi., p. 525.

which are the result of contemplation, as free and independent as the air; that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and, if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me under the fullest conviction, that, although my judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. Not content, then, with the bare consciousness of my having, in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure, I would wish that every individual, who may hear that it was a favorite plan of mine, may know also that I had no other motive for promoting it, than the advantage I conceived it would be productive of to the Union, and to this State in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigor and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

How would this matter be viewed, then, by the eye of the world, and what would be the opinion of it, when it comes to be related, that George Washington exerted himself to effect this work—and George W——— has received twenty thousand dollars and five thousand pounds sterling of the public money as an interest therein? Would not this in the estimation of it (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have acted, and without it there is no foundation for the act,) deprive me of the principal thing, which is laudable in my conduct? Would it not in some respects be

considered in the same light as a pension? And would not the apprehension of this make me more reluctantly offer my sentiments in future? In a word, under whatever pretence, and however customary these gratuitous gifts are made in other countries, should I not thenceforward be considered as a dependent? One moment's thought of which would give me more pain, than I should receive pleasure from the product of all the tolls, were every farthing of them vested in me; although I consider it as one of the most certain and increasing estates in the country.[1]

I have written to you with an openness becoming our friendship. I could have said more on the subject; but I have already said enough to let you into the state of my mind. I wish to know whether the ideas I entertain occurred to, and were expressed by, any member in or out of the House. Upon the whole you may be assured, my dear Sir, that my mind is not a little agitated. I want the best infor-

[1] The act was officially communicated to him by Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia. To that communication he replied as follows, more than a month after the above was written, and when his mind seems to have become firmly settled in its first impressions.

"I shall ever consider this act as an unequivocal and substantial testimony of the approving voice of my country for the part I have acted on the American theatre, and shall feast upon the recollection of it as often as it occurs to me; but this is all I can or mean to do. It was my first declaration in Congress, after accepting my military appointment, that I would not receive any thing for such services as I might be able to render the cause in which I had embarked. It was my fixed determination, when I surrendered that appointment, never to hold any other office under government, by which emolument might become a necessary appendage, or, in other words, which should withdraw me from the necessary attentions, which my own private concerns indispensably required; nor to accept of any pecuniary acknowledgment for what had passed. From this resolution my mind has never swerved."—February 27th.

mation and advice to settle it. I have no inclination, as I have already observed, to avail myself of the generosity of the country; nor do I wish to appear ostentatiously disinterested (for more than probable my refusal would be ascribed to this motive), or that the country should harbor an idea, that I am disposed to set little value on her favors, the manner of granting which is as flattering as the grant is important. My present difficulties, however, shall be no impediment to the progress of the undertaking. I will receive the full and frank opinions of my friends with thankfulness. I shall have time enough between the sitting of the next Assembly to consider the tendency of the act, and in this, as in all other matters, will endeavor to decide for the best. * * *

I am, my dear Sir, &c.

note

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 8 February, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 26th of December and 16th of January. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have enacted laws, of which the enclosed is a copy. They are exactly similar in both States. At the same time, and at the joint and equal expense of the two governments, the sum of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six dollars and two thirds are voted for opening and keeping in repair a road from the highest prac-

ticable navigation of this river, to that of the River Cheat, or Monongahela, as commissioners who are appointed to survey and lay out the same, shall find most convenient and beneficial to the western settlers; and have concurred in an application to the State of Pennsylvania for permission to open another road from Fort Cumberland to the Youghiogany, at the Three Forks, or Turkey Foot. A similar bill to the one enclosed is passed by our Assembly respecting the navigation of James River, and the communication between it and the waters of the Great Kanhawa. And the Executive, authorized by a resolve of the Assembly to appoint commissioners, to examine and report the most convenient course for a canal between Elizabeth River and the waters of Roanoke, with an estimate of the expense; and, if the best communication shall be found to require the concurrence of the State of North Carolina thereto, to make application to the legislature thereof accordingly.

Towards the latter part of the year 1783, I was honored with a letter from the Countess of Huntington,[1] briefly reciting her benevolent intention of spreading Christianity among the tribes of Indians inhabiting our western territory, and expressing a desire of my advice and assistance to carry this charitable design into execution. I wrote her Ladyship for answer, that it would by no means comport

[1] Selina, daughter of Earl Ferrars, born 1707. A serious illness tinged her thoughts with religious enthusiasm. As early as 1775, Governor Hutchinson found her anxious on the state of religion in America, "wishing to see people there lay less stress on the non-essentials of religion, and to pay greater regard to the vital parts of it."—*Hutchinson's Diary*, i., 348.

with the plan of retirement I had promised myself, to take an active or responsible part in this business; and that it was my belief, there was no other way to effect her pious and benevolent design, but by first reducing these people to a state of greater civilization; but that I would give every aid in my power, consistent with that ease and tranquillity, to which I meant to devote the remainder of my life, to carry her plan into effect. Since that time I have been favored with other letters from her, and a few days ago, under cover from Sir James Jay, the papers herewith enclosed.[1]

As the plan contemplated by Lady Huntington, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object, and may, I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before you for your free and candid sentiments thereon. The communication I make of this matter to you, Sir, is in a private way; but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntington to the members individually, or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these. First, I do not

[1] These papers presented a general outline of Lady Huntington's plan. Her primary object was to civilize and christianize the Indians. For this end she applied to some of the States for grants of lands, on which emigrants might establish themselves. Schools were to be established, and religious instruction provided for, under such regulations as to produce the best practical results; and the arts of life were to be taught, and the means of civilization communicated, by the example of the settlers, and by such direct efforts as should be deemed suited to the great purposes in view.

believe that any of the States to which she has written, unless it may be New York, are in circumstances, since their cession of territory, to comply with the requisitions respecting emigration; but it has been privately hinted to me, and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety, that, notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the address respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants, which were designed to avoid giving alarms in England, the former will be great, and the useful artisans among them many. Second, because such emigration, if it should effect the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes, which would be thereby answered, will be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her Ladyship's wishes, it must nevertheless be of considerable importance from the increase of population by orderly and well-disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier, and attempt the conversion of the Indians without involving an expense to the Union.

I see but one objection to a compact, unmixed, and powerful settlement of this kind, if it is likely to be so, the weight of which you will judge. It is (and her Ladyship seems to have been aware of it, and endeavors to guard against it,) placing a people in a body upon our exterior, where they will be contiguous to Canada, who may bring with them strong prejudices against us and our form of government, and equally strong attachments to the country and institutions they leave, without the means (being detached

and unmixed with citizens of different sentiments) of having them eradicated.[1]

Her Ladyship has spoken so feelingly and sensibly on the religious and benevolent purposes of the plan, that no language of which I am possessed can add aught to enforce her observations. And no place I think bids so fair to answer her views, as that spot in Hutchins's map, marked Miami Village and Fort. From hence there is a communication to all parts by water; and at which in my opinion we ought to have a post. * * *

Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlet you sent me, and for the resolutions respecting the temporary and permanent seat of government. If I

[1] Local and political reasons prevented Lady Huntington's plan from being carried into effect. Congress had pledged all the wild lands for a specific object, and the States had ceded their lands to the Union, and of course had none to appropriate for such a purpose. The answer from Mr. Lee to the above letter will explain this point in regard to Congress. "At the same time your packet reached me," said he, "there came one to Congress from Governor Henry, with her Ladyship's letter and plan enclosed, which the Governor strongly recommended. It was presently observed, that the terms upon which lands had been ceded to the United States did not leave it in the power of Congress to dispose of them for any other purpose, than for paying the debts of the public by a full and fair sale of all the ceded lands. It was indeed remarked, that those religious people, whom her Ladyship had in prospect to transport and fix on our frontier, were remarkable in the late war for a unanimous and bitter enmity to the American cause, and might form a dangerous settlement at so great a distance, contiguous to the Indians, and easily accessible to Canada; especially in the present very unfriendly temper of mind, that we now suppose the British nation possesses with respect to us. It was therefore ordered, that Governor Henry's letter with the enclosures should be filed, and nothing more be done in the affair."—New York, February 27th.

To Sir James Jay he was somewhat more full in his objection: "There are but two reasons, which my imagination suggests, that can be opposed to it. The first is, the pressing debts of the United Sates, which may call for the revenue, that can be drawn from the advantageous sale of their lands, and the discon-

might be permitted to hazard an opinion of the latter, I would say, that, by the time your federal buildings on the banks of the Delaware, along the point of a triangle are fit for the reception of Congress, it will be found that they are very improperly placed for the seat of the Empire, and will have to undergo a second edition in a more convenient one. If the Union continues, and this is not the case, I will agree to be classed among the false prophets, and suffer for evil prediction. * * *

TO REV. WILLIAM GORDON.

Mount Vernon, 8 March, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Since my last to you, I have been favored with several of your letters, which should not have remained so long unacknowledged, had I not been a good deal pressed by matters which could not well be delayed; and because I found a difficulty in complying with your request respecting the profiles. The latter it is not in my power to do now satisfactorily. Some imperfect miniature cuts I send you under cover with this letter. They were designed for me by Miss D'Hart of Elizabethtown, and given to Mrs. Washington, who, in sparing them, only wishes they may answer your

tents, which might flow from discrimination, if peculiar exemptions, in the original purchase, or indulgences thereafter, are expected in favor of the class of settlers proposed by the plan; and, secondly, (which may have more weight,) the prejudices of monarchical people, where they are unmixed with republicans, against those who have separated from them, and against their forms of government, and this too in the vicinity of a British one, viz: Canada."

purpose. For her I can get none cut yet. If M. Du Simitiere is living, and at Philadelphia, it is possible he may have miniature engravings of most if not all the military characters you want, and in their proper dresses. He drew many good likenesses from the life, and got them engraved at Paris for sale. Among these I have seen General Gates, Baron Steuben, and others, as also of your humble servant. The Marquis de Lafayette had left this before your request of his profile came to hand.

You ask if the character of Colonel John Laurens, as drawn in the *Independent Chronicle* of the 2d of December last, is just. I answer, that such parts of the drawing, as have fallen under my own observation, is literally so; and that it is my firm belief his merits and worth richly entitle him to the whole picture. No man possessed more of the *amor patriæ*. In a word, he had not a fault, that I ever could discover, unless intrepidity bordering upon rashness could come under that denomination; and to this he was excited by the purest motives.

The order alluded to in my private letter, a copy of which you requested, I now send. You might have observed, for I believe the same private letter takes notice thereof, that it was consequent of a resolve of Congress, that Fort Washington was so pertinaciously held, before the ships passed that post. Without unpacking chests, unbundling papers, &c., I cannot come at, to give you a copy of, that resolve; but I well remember, that, after reciting the importance of securing the upper navigation of the Hudson, I am directed to

obtain hulks, to sink them for the purpose of obstructing the navigation, and to spare no other cost to effect it. Owing to this, the posts of Forts Washington and Lee, on account of the narrowness of the river, some peculiarity of the channel, and strength of the ground at those places, were laboriously fortified. Owing to this, we left Fort Washington strongly garrisoned in our rear, when we were obliged to retreat to the White Plains; and owing to this, also, Colonel Magaw, who commanded at it, was ordered to defend it to the last extremity.

But when, maugre all the obstructions which had been thrown into the channel, all the labor and expense which had been bestowed on the works, and the risks we had run of the garrison theretofore, the British ships of war had passed, and could pass those posts, it was clear to me from that moment, that they were no longer eligible, and that that on the east side of the river ought to be withdrawn whilst it was in our power. In consequence thereof, the letter of the 8th of November, 1776, was written to General Greene from the White Plains; that post and all the troops in the vicinity of it being under his orders. I give this information, and I furnish you with a copy of the order for the evacuation of Fort Washington, because you desire it, not that I want to exculpate myself from any censure, which may have fallen on me by charging another. I have sent your recipe for the preservation of young plants to the Alexandria printer, and wish the salutary effect which the author of the discovery in the annual register has pointed to may be realized,

the process is simple and not expensive which renders it more valuable.

Some accounts say, that matters are in train for an accommodation between the Austrians and Dutch. If so, the flames of war may be arrested before they blaze out and become very extensive; but, admitting the contrary, I hope none of the sparks will light on American ground, which, I fear, is made up of too much combustible matter for its well-being.

Your young friend is in high health, and as full of spirits as an egg shell is of meat. I informed him I was going to write to you, and desired to know if he had any commands. His spontaneous answer, "I beg he will make haste and come here again." All the rest of the family are well, except Mrs. Washington, who is too often troubled with bilious and colicky complaints to enjoy perfect health. All join in best wishes for you and yours, with dear Sir, &c.

TO HUGH WILLIAMSON, IN CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 15 March, 1785.

SIR,

It has so happened, that your favor of the 19th ultimo did not come to my hands until the last mail arrived at Alexandria. By the return of it I have the honor to address this letter to you.

Mr. McMeikens's explanation of the movements of Rumsey's newly invented boat is consonant to my ideas, and warranted by the principles upon which it acts. The small manual assistance, to which I alluded,

was to be applied in still water and to the steerage. The counteraction being proportioned to the action, it must ascend a swift current faster than a gentle stream; and both, with more ease than it can move through dead water. But in the first there may be, and no doubt is, a point beyond which it cannot go without involving consequences, which may be found insurmountable. Further than this I am not at liberty to explain myself; but if a model, or thing in miniature, is a just representation of a greater object in practice, there is no doubt of the utility of the invention. A view of his model, with the explanation, removed the principal doubt I ever had in my mind of the practicability of propelling against a stream by the aid of mechanical power; but as he wanted to avail himself of my introduction of it to the public attention, I chose previously to see the actual performance of the model in a descending stream before I passed my certificate; and having done so, all my doubts were satisfied.

I thank you, Sir, for your account of the last Indian treaty. I had received a similar one before, but do not comprehend by which line our northern limits are to be fixed. Two things seem naturally to result from this agreement with the western Indians; the terms on which the ceded lands are to be disposed of, and the mode of settling them. The first, in my opinion, ought not to be delayed; the second ought not to be too diffusive. Compact and progressive seating will give strength to the Union, admit law, and good government, and federal aids at an early period. Sparse settlements in several new States, or a large territory for one, will have the direct contrary effects; and,

whilst it opens a large field to land-jobbers and speculators, who are prowling about like wolves in many shapes, will injure the real occupier and useful citizens, and consequently the public interest.

If a tract of country, of convenient size for a new State, contiguous to the present settlements on the Ohio, is laid off, and a certain proportion of the land seated, or at least granted, before any other State is marked out, and no land is to be obtained beyond the limits of it, we shall, I conceive, reap great political advantages from such a line of conduct; and without it, may be involved in much trouble and perplexity before any new State will be well organized, or contribute any thing to the support of the Union.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 15 March, 1785.

I have had the honor to receive your excellencys' favor of the 14th of February, and pray you to accept my thanks for the copy of the treaty with the Western Indians, with which you were so obliging as to furnish me; from the accounts given me last fall, (whilst I was on the Ohio) I did not expect such a cession of territory from the tribes that met. The Shawnees are pretty numerous, among the most warlike of the Ohio Indians: but if the subscribing Indians mean to keep good faith, and a treaty should be favorably negotiated with the more southerly Indians, their spirit must yield, or they might easily be extirpated. The wisdom of Congress will now be called upon to fix a

happy medium price on these lands, and to point out the most advantageous mode of seating them, so as that law and good government may be administered, and the Union strengthened and supported thereby. Progressive seating, I conceive, is the only means by which this can be effected; and unless in the scale of politics, more than one new state is found necessary at this time, the unit I believe would be found more pregnant with advantages than the decies. The latter if I mistake not, will be more advancive of individual interest, than the public welfare. As you will have the untowardness, jealousy, and pride, which are characteristic of the Spanish nation to contend with, it is more than probable that Mr. Gardoqui will give Congress a good deal of trouble, respecting the navigation of the river Mississippi. To me it should seem, that the true policy of that government would be to make New Orleans a free mart, instead of shutting its ports, but their ideas of trade are very confined I believe. I take the liberty of putting a letter under cover of this to Mr. Lee. Mrs. Washington offers her respectful compliments to you.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JAMES DUANE.

MOUNT VERNON, 10 April, 1785.

DR. SIR,

Inclosed you have my answer to the Acts of your Corporation, which I pray you to present.—I thank you for "the arguments and judgment of the Mayor's

Court of the City of New York in a cause between Elizabeth Rutgers and Joshua Waddington"—I have read them with all the attention I am master of, and tho' I do not pretend to be a competent judge of the Law of Nations, or the principle and policy of the statute upon which the action was founded, yet I must confess that reason seems very much in favor of the opinion given by the Court, and my judgment yields a hearty assent to it.

It is painful to hear that a State which used to be the foremost in Acts of liberality and its exertion to establish our federal system upon a broad bottom and solid ground, contracting her ideas and pointing them to local and independent measures, which if persevered in must sap the constitution of these States—(already too weak)—destroy our national character, and render us as contemptible in the eyes of Europe, as we have it in our own power to be respectable.—It should seem as if the impost of 5 p ct would never take place, for no sooner does an obstinate State begin to relent, and adopt the recommendations of Congress, but some other runs restiff, as if there was a combination among them to defeat the measure.

From the latest European accots. it is probable an accommodation will take place between the Emperor and Holland—but to reverberate news to a man at the source of intelligence would be idle—therefore mum.

The Dutch I conceive are too much attached to their possessions, and to their wealth, if they could yield to the pangs of parting with their country, to

adopt the plan you hinted to Mr. Van Berkel—The nations of Europe are ripe for slavery—a thirst after riches,—promptitude to luxury, and a sinking into venality, with their concomitants, untune them for manly exertions and virtuous sacrifices.

I do not know from whence (except the probability of my accompanying the Marqs. de la Fayette as far as New York) the report of my coming to Trenton could have originated; for tho' pressed by him, it had never been in contemplation by me, to make the tour at the season he embarked.

Mrs. Washington and myself entertain a grateful sense of the kind recollection of us, by you, Mrs. and Miss Duane, and the other branches of your family, and beg leave to present our compliments to and best wishes for them all.

With very great esteem and regard, I have, &c.

P. S. If our Rocky hill acquaintance Mrs. Vanhorne, has removed, (as she talk'd of doing) to the City of New York,—I pray you to recall me in respectful terms to her remembrance.

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 16 May, 1785.

In for a penny, in for a pound, is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil, that I am *now* altogether at their beck; and sit, "like Patience on a monument," whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among

many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a colt is of the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yielded a ready obedience to your request and to the views of Mr. Pine.

Letters from England recommendatory of this gentleman came to my hands previous to his arrival; not only as an artist of genius and taste, but as one who had shown a very friendly disposition towards this country, for which it seems he had been marked.

It gave me pleasure to hear from you. I shall always feel an interest in your happiness; and, with Mrs. Washington's compliments and best wishes joined to my own for Mrs. Hopkinson and yourself, I am, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

MOUNT VERNON, 20 May, 1785.

MY DR. SIR,

After a long and boisterous passage, my nephew, G. A. Washington, returned to this place a few days since, and delivered me your letter of the 25th of April.

[1] "April 28th. To dinner Mr. Pine, a pretty eminent Portrait and historical painter arrived in order to take my picture from the life, and place it in the historical pieces he was about to draw. This gentleman stands in good estimation as a painter in England; comes recommended to me from Colo. Fairfax, Mr. Morris, Govr. Dickinson, Mr Hopkinson, and others."—*Washington's Diary.*

Under the state of the case between you and Capt. Gun, I give it as my decided opinion that your honor and reputation will not only stand perfectly acquitted for the non-acceptance of his challenge, but that your prudence and judgment would have been condemnable for accepting of it in the eyes of the world :— because, if a commanding officer is amenable to private calls for the discharge of public duty, he has a dagger always at his breast, and can turn neither to the right nor to the left without meeting its point ; in a word he is no longer a free agent in office, as there are few military decisions which are not offensive to one party or the other.

However just Capt: Gun's claim upon the public might have been, the mode adopted by him (according to your account) to obtain it, was to the last degree dangerous. A precedent of the sort once established in the army, would no doubt have been followed ; and in that case would unquestionably have produced a revolution ; but of a very different kind from that which, happily for America, has prevailed.

It gives me real concern to find by your letter, that you are still embarrassed with the affairs of Banks ; I should be glad to hear, that the evil is likely to be temporary only ; ultimately, that you will not suffer. From my nephew's account, this man has participated of the qualities of Pandora's box, and has spread as many mischiefs. How came so many to be taken in by him ? If I recollect right, when I had the pleasure to see you last, you said an offer had been made you of back lands, as security or payment in part for

your demand. I then advised you to accept it. I now repeat it—you cannot suffer by doing this, altho' the lands may be high rated.—If they are good I would almost pledge myself that you will gain more in ten years by the rise in the price, than you could by accumulation of interest.

The Marqs. de la Fayette is safe arrived in France, and found his Lady and family well. From his letters, those of the Chevr. de la Luzerne, Count de Rochambeau and others to me, dated between the middle and last of Feby., I think there will be no war in Europe this year, but some of the most intelligent of these writers are of opinion that the Emperial Court and Russia will not suffer matters to remain tranquil much longer. The desire of the first to annex the Dutchy of Bavaria to its dominions in exchange for the Austrian possessions in the Netherlands is very displeasing, it seems, to the military powers, which added to other matters may kindle the flames of a general war.

Few matters of domestic nature are worth the relation; otherwise, I might inform you, that the plan for improving and extending the navigation of this river has met a favorable beginning. Tuesday last was the day appointed by law for the subscribers to meet—250 shares were required by law to constitute and incorporate the company; but upon comparing the Books, it was found that between four and five hundred shares were subscribed.

What has been done respecting the navigation of James river I know not—I fear little.

This State did a handsome thing, and in a handsome manner for me; in each of these navigations they gave me and my heirs forever fifty shares; but as it is incompatible with my principles, and contrary to my declarations I do not mean to accept of them. But how to refuse them, without incurring the charge of disrespect to the country on the one hand, and an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on my part on the other, I am a little at a loss: time and the good advice of my friends must aid me, as the Assembly will not meet 'till Octor., and made this gratuitous offer among, if not the last act of the last session, as if they were determined I should not resolve what to do from the *first* impulse. Mrs. Washington joins me in every good wish for you, and with sentiments of attachment and regard, I am, &c.

TO BURWELL BASSETT.

MOUNT VERNON, 23rd May, 1785.

DEAR SIR:

It would have given me much pleasure to have seen you at Richmond; and it was part of my original plan to have spent a few days with you at Eltham whilst I was in the lower parts of the country; but an intervention of circumstances not only put it out of my power to do the latter, but would have stopped my journey to Richmond altogether, had not the meeting, the time and the place been of my own appointing. I left company at home when I went away who proposed to wait my return—among whom

a Mr. Pine, an artist of eminence, came all the way from Philadelphia on purpose for some materials for an historical painting which he is about, and for which he was obliged to stay till I got back, which I did after an absence of eight days only.

My nephew, Geo. Aug. Washington, is just returned from his perigrination, apparently much amended in his health, but not quite free from the disorder in his side. I have understood that his addresses to Fanny were made with your consent, and I now learn that he is desirous, and she is willing, to fulfil the engagement they have entered into, and that they are applying to you for permission to do so.

It has ever been a maxim with me through life, neither to promote nor to prevent a matrimonial connection, unless there should be something indispensably requiring interference in the latter. I have always considered marriage as the most interesting event of one's life, the foundation of happiness or misery. To be instrumental therefore in bringing two people together, who are indifferent to each other, and may soon become objects of disgust; or to prevent a union which is prompted by the affections of the mind, is what I never could reconcile with reason, and therefore neither directly nor indirectly have I ever said a word to Fanny or George, upon the subject of their intended connection, but as their attachment to each other seems of early growth, warm and lasting, it bids fair for happiness. If therefore, you have no objection, I think, the sooner it is consummated the better.

I have just now informed them both (the former through Mrs. Washington) that it is my wish they should live at Mt. Vernon.

It is unnecessary, I hope, to say how happy we should be to see you, her brothers, and any of her friends, who can make it convenient and are disposed, at this place on this occasion. All here join in best wishes for you.

TO WILLIAM MINOR.

SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 27 May, 1785.

My objection to paying your account when here—was, now is, and whether it is done or not, will be—that it comes neither under the letter nor spirit of my letter to Mr. Baker. My object was to give Lawce. Posey[1] a year's schooling to fit him for some of the better occupations of life :—to do this, I agreed to pay his board also, both of which together, I was inform'd would amount at the free school to £17—Md. Curry.—What followed? Why, he neither went to the school nor boarded with the person under whose care he was intended to be put—*this by* your own confession. Is it just, is it reasonable then that I should look *back* to expenses which had been incurred previous to the date of my letter, or even *forward* to what might be incurred, if the end which I had in view was not to be answered by it? If the child did not go to the school nor derive the benefits

[1] Amelia Posey, his sister, was for some years in the keeping of Mrs. Washington.

which were intended him from it, could it be supposed I meant to pay for his board without; when his father's house and eye were more proper than any other? Might he not as well have been at home with his father, as at any other place idle? Upon these grounds it was, and under this state I repeat it, that if there is a disinterested man upon earth, who will say I ought to comply with your request, I will do it: and you may have the chusing of him or them; for it does not suit me to go from home on this business. I am, &c.

TO TENCH TILGHMAN.[1]

MOUNT VERNON, 2 June, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

As your letter of the 30th ulto. did not reach me until late this afternoon, and the Post goes from Alexa. at 4 oclock in the morning I have scarcely a moment (being also in company) to write you a reply.—I was not sufficiently explicit in my last. The terms upon which Mr. Falconer came to this country are too high for my finances—and (to you, my dear Sir, I will add) numerous expences. I do not wish to reduce his (perhaps well founded) expectations; but it behooves me to consult my own means of complying with them.

[1] Washington had for some time been endeavoring to hire a "single man of good character and decent appearance (because he will be at my table, and with my company,) of liberal education, and a master of composition," to serve as secretary, and had written Tilghman on the matter.

I had been in hopes, that a young man of no great expectations might have begun the world with me for about fifty or sixty pounds—, but for one qualified in all respects to answer my purposes, I would have gone as far as seventy-five—more would rather distress me.

My purposes are these—To write letters agreeably to what shall be dictated. Do all other writing which shall be entrusted to him. Keep Accts.—examine, arrange, and properly methodize my Papers, which are in great disorder.—Ride, at my expence, to such other States, if I should find it more convenient to send, than attend myself, to the execution thereof. And, which was not hinted at in my last, to initiate two little children (a girl of six and a boy of 4 years of age, descendants of the deceased Mr. Custis, who live with me and are very promising) in the first rudements of education. This to both parties, would be mere amusement, because it is not my wish that the Children should be confined. If Mr. Falconer should incline to accept the above stipend in addition to his board, washing and mending,—and *you* (for I would rather have *your opinion* of the gentleman than the *report* of a thousand others in his favor) upon a close investigation of his character, Temper and moderate political tenets (for supposing him an Eglish man, he may come with prejudices, and doctrines of his Country) the sooner he comes, the better my purpose would be promoted.

If I had had time, I might have added more, but to you it would be unnecessary.—You know my wants. —You know my disposition—and you know what kind

of a man would suit them.—In haste I bid you adieu—with assurances of great regard and sincere friendship, I am, &c.[1]

TO WILLIAM GODDARD.

SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 11 June, 1785.

On the 8th instant I received the favor of your letter of the 30th of May. In answer to it I can only say, that your own good judgment must direct you in the publication of the manuscript papers of General Lee. I can have no request to make concerning the work.

I never had a difference with that gentleman but on public ground, and my conduct towards him upon this occasion was such only, as I conceived myself indispensably bound to adopt in discharge of the public trust reposed in me. If this produced in him unfavorable sentiments of me, I yet can never consider the conduct I pursued, with respect to him, either wrong or improper, however I may regret that it may have been differently viewed by him, and that it excited his censure and animadversions. Should there appear in General Lee's writings any thing injurious or unfriendly to me, the impartial and dispassionate world must decide how far I deserved it from the general tenor of my conduct.

I am gliding down the stream of life, and wish, as is natural, that my remaining days may be undisturbed

[1] William Shaw, taken on the recommendation of Thomas Montgomery, acted as secretary from 26 July, 1785, to the arrival of Tobias Lear in May, 1786, receiving for that time £56. 2 Virginia currency, or £42. 1. 6 sterling.

and tranquil; and, conscious of my integrity, I would willingly hope, that nothing would occur tending to give me anxiety; but should any thing present itself in this or any other publication, I shall never undertake the painful task of recrimination, nor do I know that I should even enter upon my justification. I consider the communication you have made as a mark of great attention, and the whole of your letter as a proof of your esteem. I am, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL KNOX.

MOUNT VERNON, 18 June, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am quite ashamed to be so long deficient in acknowledging the receipt of your favors of the 24th and 29th of March and 5th of May; but an intervention of circumstances, (with the enumeration of which I will not trouble you,) has prevented it.

It gave me pleasure to hear of your appointment to the office of secretary at war. Without a compliment, I think a better choice could not have been

[1] The manuscript papers of General Charles Lee were left by his will to Mr. Goddard, who was at this time publisher of the *Maryland Journal*, in Baltimore. He issued proposals for printing the papers of General Lee in three volumes. The work never appeared. It is said, that a person, whom he had associated with him in preparing the materials for the press, betrayed his trust, and sent parts of the manuscripts to England, where they were sold for his own benefit. They afforded the groundwork of a volume first printed in London, imperfect in its arrangement and character, entitled "The Life and Memoirs of the late Major-General Charles Lee."—Thomas' *History of Printing*, vol. ii., p. 355. The four volumes of *Lee Papers* issued by the New York Historical Society contain ample evidence of Lee's antagonism to and abuse of Washington.

made; and, though the salary is low, it may, under the circumstances you mention, be considered as auxiliary. Enclosed is a certificate of service for Major Sergeant of whose worth I have a high opinion but for want of a more competent knowledge of the time of his entering the line of the army and of the commissions he had borne I could not be more particular. At any time this summer the lime stone would be useful to me but the sooner it comes the greater benefit I shall derive from it as the walls for which I want it are now in hand. The sentiment, which you have dropped respecting the appropriation of the shares, which were intended for me by the Assembly of this State, in the navigation of the rivers Potomac and James, is very pleasing, and it would give me great pleasure to see it realized.[1]

For want of a complete view of the designs of Congress respecting the western territory, and not knowing how matters stand with Great Britain respecting the posts of Detroit and other places at present in the occupation of British garrisons on the American side of the line, I feel myself incompetent to answer your question respecting such posts, as may be proper for the purposes you mention; but, under my present ideas of the matter, I am inclined to think, if garrisons are to be established within the limits and jurisdiction of any of the *present* States, that Fort Pitt, or Fort

[1] A suggestion that the donation of the legislature might be appropriated with proper delicacy to the support of the widows and orphans of those men, of the Virginia line, who had sacrificed their lives in the defence of their country.

McIntosh,[1] whichever shall be found most convenient and in best repair, would suit very well for a post of deposit, from whence all the others should be supplied; and, as it is my opinion, that great part of the fur and peltry of the lakes, when we shall have free access to them, will be transported by the Cayahoga and Big Beaver Creek, a post at the mouth of the latter, or some convenient post on the former, must be eligible. The spot marked Miami Village and Fort in Hutchins's Map, I have always considered as of importance, being a central point between Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, and the River Ohio, communicating with each by water. To these, the Falls of Ohio, or some more convenient spot for the lower settlements, may be added. Whether this chain embraces territory enough; whether it goes far enough to the southward to afford protection to the back settlers of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia; or whether these are objects meant to be comprehended, is for those, who are more behind the curtain than I am, to determine. My opinion of the matter is, that I have described a sufficient extent of the country to answer all our present purposes; beyond which neither settlements nor location of land ought to be admitted, because a larger would open a more extensive field for land-jobbers and speculators, weaken our frontiers by the sparseness of the settlements, exclude law, good government, and taxation to a late period, and injure the Union very essentially in many respects.

At the conflux of the Great Kanhawa with the Ohio a post might be established so as to answer beneficial

[1] A fort on the Ohio River twenty-five miles below Pittsburg.

purposes. Indeed it is the opinion of many, that it is a more eligible place than Pittsburg. In time, if the navigation of the Kanhawa should be extended, and an easy communication had with James River, it may be so; but in the present state of things, considering the settlements about the latter, and the sources from whence proceed all the supplies of that country, it certainly is not. As a post for the protection of the river and the movements thereon, it may be desirable.

If I am right in my principles, some such distribution as the following may not be ineligible for the seven hundred men, which are ordered to be raised. At Fort Pitt, Fort McIntosh, or the mouth of Big Beaver, (being in the vicinity of a thick settlement,) only one hundred men. Cayahogą, whence a detachment might occupy the carrying-place between that water and Big Beaver, being on the line and most exposed, allow two hundred. Miami Fort, or Village, and dependencies, &c. two hundred. At the Falls of Ohio, or some spot more convenient and healthy on that river, one hundred and fifty. At the conflux of the Great Kanhawa and the Ohio, for security of the river, protection of trade, and covering emigrants, fifty. Total—700. * * *

TO WILLIAM GRAYSON.

MOUNT VERNON, 22 June, 1785.

DR. SIR,

Since my last to you I have been favored with your letters of the 5th, 27th, & —— of May and beg your acceptance of my thanks for their enclosures, and for

the communications you were pleased to make me therein.

I am very glad to find you have pass'd an Ordinance of Congress respecting the sale of the Western Lands :—I am too well acquainted with the local politics of individual States, not to have foreseen the difficulties you met with in this business ;—these things are to be regretted, but not to be altered, until liberallity of sentiment is more universal.—Fixing the Seat of Empire at any spot on the Delaware, is in my humble opinion, demonstrably wrong ;—to incur an expence for what may be call'd the permanent seat of Congress, at this time is, I conceive evidently impolitic ; for without the gift of prophecy, I will venture to predict that under any circumstance of confederation, it will not remain so far to the Eastward long ; & that until the public is in better circumstances, it ought not to be built at all. Time too powerful for sophistry, will point out the place & disarm localities of their power.—In the meanwhile let the Widow, the Orphan, and the Suffering Soldier, who are crying to you for their dues, receive *that* which can very well be rendered to them.

There is nothing new in this quarter of an interesting nature, to communicate, unless you should not have been informed that the Potomac navigation proceeds under favorable auspices ; At the general meeting of the subscribers in May last, it appeared that upwards of 400 of the 500 shares had been engaged,—many more have been subscribed since—a Board of Directors have been chosen—proper characters &

Laborers advertized for, to commence the work in the least difficult parts of the river 'till a skillful Engineer can be engaged to undertake those which are more so; and it is expected the work will be begun by the 10th of next month.

With great esteem & regard, I am, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

MOUNT VERNON, 22 June, 1785.

DR. SIR,

I stand indebted to you for your favors of the 3d, 7th, and 29th of last month, and feel myself exceedingly obliged to your Excellency for the communications and enclosures therein.—

It gives me pleasure to find that an Ordinance of Congress has passed respecting the Western Territory.—A little longer delay of this business, and I believe the country would have been settled, maugre, all that could have been done to prevent it; as it is, I am not clear that the same respect will be paid *now* to this Ordinance, which would have been at an earlier period, before men began to speculate in Lands No. West of the Ohio, and to obtrude themselves thereon.

From the general tenor of my letters from very respectable characters in France, I think it most likely that the dispute between the Emperor and Holland will be settled without bloodshed, and that the former will hardly be able to effect the exchange of his Northerland Dominions for the Dutchy of Bavaria, among other reasons because the Duke de Deux

Ponts, nephew and heir to the Elector, is opposed thereto: but notwithstanding that the state of politics, and temper of some of the formidable Powers of Europe are such as to place War at no remote distance.

I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. Macaulay Graham, who after a stay of about ten days, left this in order to embark for England, from New York; I am obliged to you for introducing a Lady to me whose reputation among the literati is so high, and whose principles are so much and so justly admired by the friends of liberty and of mankind.—it gave me pleasure to find that her sentiments respecting the inadequacy of the powers of Congress, as also those of Doctr. Price's, coincide with my own; experience evinces the truth of these observations, and the late movement of the mercantile interest exhibits a recent proof of the conviction it is working in the popular mind, but it is unfortunate for us, that evils which might have been averted, must be first felt, and our national character for wisdom, justice and temperance, suffer in the eyes of the world, before we can guide the political machine as it ought to be. * * *

I am, &c.

TO GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX.

MY DR. SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 30 June, 1785.

* * * * * *

I have not yet received the Pictures which you were so obliging as to send me by Mr. Bracken; but have some prospect now of getting them, as Colo.

Bassett who left this lately & who expects to be up again in Octor. to the marriage of his Daughter who lives with us, with a son of my brother Charles (who acted as an Aid de Camp to the Marqs. de la Fayette from the year 1780, to the close of the War) has promised to bring them.—Altho' I have lately had the pleasure of seeing the original in the hands of the designer & executioner Mr. Pine, who spent three weeks with me in May last.—

Mr. Pine has met a favorable reception in this country, & may, I conceive, command as much business as he pleases: he is now preparing materials for historical representations of some of the most important events of the War; & if his choice and the execution is equal to the field he has to display his talents in, the pieces (which will be large) will do him much credit as an artist, & be interesting for America & its friends as a deposit for their posterity.

The information which you have given of the disposition of a certain Court coincides precisely with the sentiments I had formed of it from my own observations upon many late occurrences, and from a combination of circumstances. With respect to ourselves, I wish I could add, that as much wisdom has pervaded our councils; as reason & common policy most evidently dictated; but the truth is, the people must *feel* before they will *see*, consequently are brought slowly into measures of public utility. Past experience, or the admonitions of a few, have but little weight—where ignorance, selfishness and design possess the major part:—but evils of this nature work

their own cure; tho' the remedy comes slower than those who foresee, or think they foresee the danger, attempt to effect. With respect to the commercial system which G: B: is pursuing with this country, the Ministers, in this as in other matters, are defeating their own ends, by facilitating those powers in Congress which will produce a counteraction of their plans, and which half a century without, would not have invested that body with. The restriction of our trade, and the additional duties which are imposed upon many of our staple commodities, have put the commercial people of this Country in motion;—they now see the indispensable necessity of a general *controuling* power, and are addressing their respective Assemblies to grant this to Congress.—Before this every State thought itself competent to regulate its own Trade and were verifying the observations of Lord Sheffield; who supposed we never could agree upon any general plan;—but those who will go a little deeper into matters, than his Lordship seems to have done, will readily perceive that in any measure where the Fœderal interest is touched, however wide apart the politics of individual States may be, yet as soon as it is discovered they will always unite to effect a common good. * * *

Our course of Husbandry in this country, & more especially in this State, is not only exceedingly unprofitable, but so destructive to our Lands, that it is my earnest wish to adopt a better; & as I believe no country has carried the improvement of Land & the benefits of Agriculture to greater perfection than

England, I have asked myself frequently of late, whether a thorough bred practical English Farmer from a part of England where husbandry seems to be best understood & is most advantageously practised could not be obtain'd? and upon what terms? The thought having again occurred to me, whilst I was in the act of writing this letter, I resolved as a more certain & eligible mode of having the questions determined, to propound them to you. That a man of character & knowledge may be had for *very high wages*, there can be no doubt—money we know will fetch anything & command the service of any man; but with the former I do not abound.—To engage a man upon shares as the Overseers of this country are, might be productive of much discontent to the employed; for we could scarcely convey to a good English Farmer a just idea of the wretched condition of our Lands—what dressings they will require, and how entirely our system must be changed to make them productive:—and if we do not, disappointment and continual murmurings would be the consequence. It follows then that the only means by which we can think of obtaining one, must be to give standing wages:—for what then my good Sir, do you think a sober, industrious and knowing Farmer might be had to take of one of our plantations—say of ten laborers? Or to bring the matter nearer to his own conception of things—a Farm of about 200 or 250 acres of cleared Land, to be stocked with a competent number of plows—Black Cattle, Sheep and hogs?

When I speak of a knowing Farmer, I mean one who understands the best course of crops, how to plough—to sow—to mow—to hedge—to Ditch, and above all, Midas like, one who can convert every thing he touches into manure, as the first transmutation towards gold :—in a word one who can bring worn out and gullied Lands into good tilth in the shortest time. I do not mean to put you to the trouble of actually engaging one, but I should be obliged to you for setting on foot the enquiry—and for communicating the result of it to me ;—because I could not receive your answer in time for the next year; the autumn being, as you well know the season at which our Overseers are engaged, and our plans for the ensuing Crop must be formed.

These enquiries, as you will readily perceive are pointed to a Farmer of the middling class ;—which more than probably would best answer my purpose; —but if it could be made convenient to you to extend enquiries further ;—permit me to ask if one of a higher order could be had? And upon what terms? I mean for a Steward.

It may not in this place be amiss to observe to you that I still decline the growth of Tobacco, and to add, that it is my intention to raise as little Indian Corn as may be:—in a word, that I am desirous of entering upon a compleat course of husbandry as practiced in the best Farming counties of England.—I enquire for a man of this latter description with little hope of success—1st because I believe one who is compleatly fit for my purposes, wou'd be above my price; & 2dly because I have taken up an idea that an English

Steward is not so much a farmer, as he is an Attorney or an Accomptant; because few of the Nobility and Gentry having their Estates in their own hands—stand more in need of a Collector who, at the same time that he receives the rents, will see that the Covenants of the leases are complied with, repairs made &c., &c., than of a Farmer.—In this however, I may be mistaken—One thing more and then I will close this long letter:—if from your own observation, or from good information you should fix your eyes upon men of one or both of these descriptions—and could ascertain his or their terms, (leaving me at liberty to accede to them or not, within a reasonable time for an intercourse by letter) I had rather he or they should be personally known to you; or their characters well ascertained by a friend in whom you can confide; because what you or such a person would say of them, I could rely upon; but how often do we find recommendations given without merit to deserve them,—founded in a disposition to favor the applicant, or want of resolution to refuse them—oftentimes indeed, to get rid of a dependant who is troublesome or injurious to us, upon what are *called* decent terms.—A man in the character of a Steward (if single, and his appearance equal to it,) would live in the House with me, and be at my table, in the manner Lund Washington was accustomed to do, who is now married and a House Keeper tho' still attending my business.[1] The common Farmer would live on the Farm which would be entrusted to his care. * * *

[1] Lund Washington had married Elizabeth Foote, in 1782.

I have not yet seen Mr. Thos. Corbin, he sent your letter under cover a few days ago with assurances of making me a visit as soon as he had recovered from a slight indisposition.—He appears from your account to have been very ill treated by his brother Dick,—but the latter I understand has not been behind him in charges to some of his friends in this country, who think Thos. in the wrong.

Mrs. Washington joins me in most affectionate regards, & in every good wish for you & Mrs. Fairfax. —with much truth

I am, &c.[1]

TO DAVID HUMPHREYS.

MOUNT VERNON, 25 July, 1785.

MY DEAR HUMPHREYS,

Since my last to you, I have received your letter of the 15th of January, and, I believe, that of the 11th of November, and thank you for them. It always gives me pleasure to hear from you; and I should think, if *amusements* would spare you, business could not so much absorb your time as to prevent your writing more frequently, especially as there is a regular conveyance once a month by the packet.

As the complexion of European politics seems now (by letters I have received from the Marquis de Lafayette, the Chevalier de Chastellux, the Chevalier de la Luzerne, and others,) to have a tendency to peace, I will say nothing of war, nor make any animadversions upon the contending powers; otherwise I might possi-

[1] "June 30th.—Dined with only Mrs. Washington, which, I believe is the first instance of it since my retirement from public life."—*Diary*.

bly have said, that the retreat from it seemed impossible after the explicit declaration of the parties. My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from off the earth, and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements, than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind. Rather than quarrel about territory, let the poor, the needy, and oppressed of the earth, and those who want land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the *second land of promise*, and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment.

In a former letter I informed you, my dear Humphreys, that if I had *talents* for it, I have not *leisure* to turn my thoughts to Commentaries. A consciousness of a defective education, and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking. What with company, letters, and other matters, many of them quite extraneous, I have not been able to arrange my own private concerns so as to rescue them from that disordered state into which they have been thrown by the war, and to do which is become absolutely necessary for my support whilst I remain on this stage of human action. The sentiments of your last letter on this subject gave me great pleasure. I should be pleased indeed to see you undertake this business. Your abilities as a writer, your discernment respecting the principles which led to the decision by arms, your personal knowledge of many facts as they occurred in the progress of the war, your disposition to justice, candor, and impartiality, and your diligence in investigating truth, combining, fit you, when joined with

the vigor of life, for this task; and I should with great pleasure, not only give you the perusal of all my papers, but any oral information of circumstances, which cannot be obtained from the former, that my memory will furnish; and I can with great truth add, that my house would not only be at your service during the period of your preparing this work, but (without an unmeaning compliment I say it) I should be exceedingly happy if you would make it your home. You might have an apartment to yourself, in which you would command your own time. You would be considered and treated as one of the family, and meet with that cordial reception and entertaiment, which are characteristic of the sincerest friendship.

To reverberate European news would be idle, and we have little of domestic kind worthy of attention. We have held treaties with the Indians, but they were so unseasonably delayed, that these people, by our last accounts from the westward, are in a discontented mood, supposed by many to be instigated thereto by our late enemies (now, to be sure, *fast friend*), who, from any thing I can learn, under the indefinite expression of the treaty, hold and seem resolved to retain possession of our western posts. Congress have, also, after a long and tedious deliberation, passed an ordinance for laying off the western territory into States, and for disposing of the land; but in a manner and on terms, which few people in the southern States conceive can be accomplished. Both sides are sure, and the event is appealed to. Let time decide it. It is however to be regretted, that local politics and self-interested

views obtrude themselves into every measure of public utility :—but to such characters be the consequences.

My attention is more immediately engaged in a project, which I think big with great political, as well as commercial consequences to these States, especially the middle ones; it is by removing the obstructions and extending the inland navigation of our rivers, to bring the States on the Atlantic in chose connexion with those forming to the westward, by a short and easy transportation. Without this, I can easily conceive they will have different views, separate interests, and other connexions. I may be singular in my ideas, but they are these; that, to open a door to, and make easy the way for, those settlers to the westward (which ought to progress regularly and compactly) before we make any stir about the navigation of the Mississippi, and before our settlements are far advanced towards that river, would be our true line of policy. It can, I think, be demonstrated, that the produce of the western territory, (if the navigations which are now in hand succeed, and of which I have no doubt,) as low down the Ohio as the Great Kanhawa, I believe to the Falls, and between the parts above and the Lakes, may be brought either to the highest shipping port on this or James river, at a less expense, with more ease, (including the return,) and in a much shorter time, than it can be carried to New Orleans, if the Spaniards, instead of restricting, were to throw open their ports and invite our trade. But if the commerce of that country should embrace this channel, and connexions be formed, experience has taught us, and there

is a very recent proof with great Britain, how next to impracticable it is to divert it; and, if that should be the case, the Atlantic States, (especially as those to the westward will in a great degree fill with foreigners,) will be no more to the present Union, except to excite perhaps very justly our fears, than the country of California, which is still more to the westward, and belonging to another power.

Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you, and with every wish for your happiness,

I am, my dear Humphreys, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

MY DEAR MARQUIS, MOUNT VERNON, 25 July, 1785.

* * * * * *

As the clouds which overspread your hemisphere are dispersing, and peace with all its concomitants is dawning upon your Land, I will banish the sound of War from my letter:—I wish to see the sons and daughters of the world in Peace and busily employed in the more agreeable amusement of fulfilling the first and great commandment—*Increase and Multiply:* as an encouragement to which we have opened the fertile plains of the Ohio to the poor, the needy and the oppressed of the Earth; any one therefore who is heavy laden or who wants land to cultivate, may repair thither & abound, as in the Land of promise, with milk and honey:—the ways are preparing, and the roads will be made easy, thro' the channels of Potomac & James river.

Speaking of these navigations, I have the pleasure to inform you that the subscriptions (especially for the first) at the surrender of the books, agreeably to the act which I enclosed you in my last, exceeded my most sanguine expectation :—for the latter, that is James river, no comparison of them has yet been made.—

Of the £50,000 Sterlg. required for the Potomac navigation, upwards of £40,000, was subjoined before the middle of May, and encreasing fast—a President & four Directors, consisting of your hble. servant, Govrs. Johnson and Lee of Maryland, and Colos. Fitzgerald and Gilpin of this State, were chosen to conduct the undertaking.—The first dividend of the money was paid in on the 15th of this month; and the work is to be begun the first of next, in those parts which require least skill, leaving the more difficult 'till an Engineer of abilities and practical knowledge can be obtained; which reminds me of the question which I propounded to you in my last, on this subject, and on which I should be glad to learn your sentiments. This prospect, if it succeeds, and of which I have no doubt, will bring the Atlantic States and the Western Territory into close connexion, and be productive of very extensive commercial and political consequences; the last of *which* gave the spur to my exertions, as I could foresee many, and great mischiefs which would naturally result from a separation —and that a separation would inevitably take place, if the obstructions between the two countries remained, and the navigation of the Mississippi should be made free.

Great Britain, in her commercial policy is acting the same unwise part, with respect to herself, which seems to have influenced all her councils ; and thereby is defeating her own ends :—the restriction of our trade, and her heavy imposts on the staple commodities of this country, will I conceive, immediately produce powers in Congress to regulate the Trade of the Union ; which, more than probably would not have been obtained without in half a century. The mercantile interests of the *whole* Union are endeavoring to effect this, & will no doubt succeed ; they see the necessity of a controuling power, and the futility, indeed the absurdity, of each State's enacting Laws for this purpose independant of one another.—This will be the case also, after a while, in all matters of common concern ;—It is to be regretted, I confess, that Democratical States must always *feel* before they can *see*:—it is this that makes their Governments slow—but the people will be right at last.—

Congress after long deliberation,—have at length agreed upon a mode for disposing of the Lands of the United States in the Western territory :—it may be a good one, but it does not comport with my ideas. —The ordinance is long, and I have none of them by me, or I would send one for your perusal.—They seem in this instance, as in almost every other, to be surrendering the little power they have, to the States individually which gave it to them.— Many think the price which they have fixed upon the Lands too high ;—and all to the Southward I believe, that disposing of these in Townships, and by

square miles alternately, will be a great let to the sale:—but experience, to which there is an appeal, must decide.

Soon after I had written to you in Feby., Mr. Jefferson, and after him Mr. Carmichael informed me that in consequence of an application from Mr. Harrison for permission to export a Jack for me from Spain, his Catholic Majesty had ordered *two* of the first race in his Kingdom (lest an accident might happen to one) to be purchased and presented to me as a mark of his esteem.—Such an instance of condescension and attention from a crowned head is very flattering and lays me under great obligation to the King; but neither of them is yet arrived:—these I presume are the two mentioned in your favor of the 16th of April; one as having been shipped from Cadiz—the other as expected from the Isle of Malta, which you would forward.—As they have been purchased since December last, I began to be apprehensive of accidents; which I wish may not. In the case with respect to the one from Cadiz, if he was actually shipped at the time of your account:—should the other pass thro' your hands you cannot oblige me more, than by requiring the greatest care, & most particular attention to be paid to him. I have long endeavored to procure one of a good size and breed, but had little expectation of receiving two as a royal gift.—

I am much obliged to you my dear Marquis, for your attention to the Hounds, & not less sorry that you should have met the smallest difficulty, or expe-

rienced the least trouble in obtaining them: I was no way anxious about these, consequently should have felt no regret, or sustained no loss if you had not succeeded in your application.—I have commissioned three or four persons (among whom Colo. Marshall is one) to procure for me in Kentucke, for the use of the King's Gardens at Versailles or elsewhere, the seeds mentioned in the list you sent me from New York, and such others as are curious, and will forward them as soon as they come to my hands: which cannot be 'till after the growing crop has given its seeds.

My best wishes will accompany you to Potsdam, and into the Austrian's Dominions whenever you set out upon that tour. As an unobserved spectator, I should like to take a peep at the troops of those Monarch's at their manœuverings, upon a grand field day; but as it is among the unattainable things, my philosophy shall supply the place of curiosity, and set my mind at ease.

In your favor of the 19th of March you speak of letters which were sent by a Mr. Williams; but none such have come to hand. The present for the little folks did not arrive by Mr. Ridouts ship as you expected;—to what cause owing I know not.—Mrs. Washington has but indifferent health; & the late loss of her mother, & only brother Mr. Barthw. Dandridge (one of the Judges of our Supreme Court) has rather added to her indisposition. My mother and friends enjoy good health.—George has returned after his peregrination thro' the West Indies, to

Burmuda, the Bahama Islands, & Charlestown; at the last place he spent the winter. He is in better health than when he set out, but not quite recovered: —He is now on a journey to the Sweet Springs, to procure a stock sufficient to fit him for a matrimonial voyage in the Frigate F. Bassett; on board which he means to embark at his return in October:—how far his case is desperate, I leave you to judge—if it is so, the remedy, however pleasing at first, will certainly be violent.

The latter end of April I had the pleasure to receive in good order, by a ship from London, the picture of yourself, Madame la Fayette and the children, which I consider as an invaluable present, & shall give it the best place in my House.—Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments, & in every good wish for Madame de la Fayette, yourself & family, all the others who have come under your kind notice present their compliments to you.—For myself, I can only repeat the sincere attachment, & unbounded affection of My Dr. Marqs., &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

MOUNT VERNON, 30 July, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Although it is not my intention to derive any pecuniary advantage from the generous vote of the Assembly of this State, consequent of its gratuitous gift of shares in the navigation of each of the rivers Potomac and James; yet, as I consider these undertakings

as of vast political and commercial importance to the States on the Atlantic, especially to those nearest the centre of the Union, and adjoining the western territory, I can let no act of mine impede the progress of the work. I have therefore come to the determination to hold the shares, which the treasurer was directed to subscribe on my account, in trust for the use and benefit of the public; unless I should be able to discover, before the meeting of the Assembly, that it would be agreeable to it to have the product of the tolls arising from these shares applied as a fund, on which to establish two charity schools, one on each river, for the education and support of the children of the poor and indigent of this country, who cannot afford to give it, particularly the children of those men of this description, who have fallen in defence of the rights and liberties of it. If the plan succeed, of which I have no doubt, I am sure it will be a very productive and increasing fund, and the moneys thus applied will be a beneficial institution.

I am aware that my non-acceptance of these shares will have various motives ascribed to it, among which an ostentatious display of disinterestedness, perhaps the charge of disrespect or slight of the favors of my country, may lead the van; but under a consciousness, that my conduct herein is not influenced by considerations of this nature, and that I shall act more agreeably to my own feelings, and more consistent with my early declarations, by declining to accept them, I shall not only hope for indulgence, but a favorable interpretation of my conduct. My friends, I persuade

myself, will acquit me; the world, I hope, will judge charitably.

Perceiving by the advertisements of Messrs. Cabell, Buchanan, and Southall, that half the sum required by the act, for opening and extending the navigation of James River, is subscribed, and the 20th of next month appointed for the subscribers to meet at Richmond, I take the liberty of giving you a power to act for me on that occasion. I would (having the accomplishment of these navigations much at heart) have attended in person, but the president and directors of the Potomac company, by their own appointment, are to commence the survey of this river in the early part of next month; for which purpose I shall leave home to-morrow. Besides which if the ejectments which I have been obliged to bring for my lands in Pennsylva. are to be tried at the September term, as Mr. Smith my lawyer conceives they would and is to inform me, I shall find it necessary I fear to attend the trial. An intermediate journey therefore, in addition to Richmond, would be impracticable for me to accomplish.

I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

DEAR SIR, 13 August, 1785.

At the time your letter from the Rocks was delivered to me, I had neither pen, ink, paper, or a table to write on at command; consequently could only verbally ac-

[1] Washington was chosen president of the James River Company, but he declined to serve, although assured of being relieved of the "troublesome part." Randolph wrote: "We wish to be considered as having your particular patronage."

knowledge the receipt of it,—which I did by Mr. Wormley:—since my return home I have met your other favor of the 29th ulto.

The great object, for the accomplishment of which I wish to see the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac & James improved & extended, is to connect the Western Territory with the Atlantic States; all others with me, are secondary. Tho' I am clearly of opinion that it will greatly increase our commerce, & be an immense saving, in the article of transportation, & draft cattle, to the Planters & Farmers who are in a situation to have the produce of their labor water borne.

These being my sentiments, I wish to see the undertaking progress *equally* in both rivers; & but for my local situation, & numerous avocations, my attention to each should be alike:—what little I do for the advancement of the enterprise in this river, is done, as it were en passant; and because I think the difficulties greater than in the other—and not because I give it the preference—for both in my opinion have their advantages, without much, if any interference with each other. The advantages arising from my patronage of either, is probably more ideal than real; but such as they are, I wish them to be thought equally distributed:—my contribution to the works shall be the same. I have already subscribed five shares to the Potomac navigation; and enclosed I give you a power to put my name down for five shares to that of James river.—

With respect to acting as President to the Board of Directors for that Company, it is a delicate subject for me to speak to:—every person who knows how

much my time (by company & other matters) is occupied, must also know that it would be impossible for me to discharge the duties of the office, as they should be:—even here, where the business for the most part is, and will continue to be done at Alexandria, or George-town (eight miles further from me) it was so evident to me that I could not perform the duties of President with that diligence and propriety which I thought necessary, that I wish to decline it, but could not get excused:—How much more would this be the case with James river, where the journey to it alone would be a work of time and labor:—and besides, let it not be forgotten my Dr. Sir, that tho' *some* of the Subscribers may wish to see me at the head of the Board of Directors;—yet there may be others who would feel disappointed and hurt if they are over looked and this might have an influence on their connexions—I mention these things to you with the candor and frankness of a friend, and under the rose; after which your own judgment and those of your friends, must dictate for the best.—I am persuaded all of us have the same object in view, and what ever shall be deemed, by the concurrent voice of the subscribers, the best means to effect it, shall meet my hearty approbation.—

My last letter was written to you in such haste, that I apprehend I was not sufficiently explicit to be understood.—It was not my intention to apply for a copy of the Governor's instructions releasing him from the restriction of the King's Proclamation; but for the order of Council consequent thereof, directing or permitting Warrants to issue on military rights,

agreeably thereto :—because if the date of this order had been found to be antecedent to the occupancy of my adversaries, it would remove them from their grand Fort — for on *possession*, before I took any *legal* steps—I know they mean to place their *sole* defence.—

The Patent, & thousands of Warrants are evidences that the restrictions respecting military settlers was taken off; but they do not ascertain the time.—My Patent, if I recollect right, was dated in July, 1774;—but the occupants, according to their own accounts, possessed the Land in the Octobr. preceding ;—if therefore I could have obtained a certificate of the loss of the Council Books ; and any circumstance could have been recollected by which it should appear (as unquestionably the fact is) that the recognition of military rights was previous to October 1773, and so intimated in the certificate aforesaid ; it would have been useful:—*Without* this indeed, the matter is so clear, in my judgment, as not to admit of dispute before an impartial Jury ;—but an *impartial* Jury I do not expect—& much less since I have heard that the high Sheriff of the County (lately chosen) is of the fraternity of my competitors, & interested in the decision,—so far at least as similar circumstances, & the suffrages of these people in his election, can bias him—Indeed I have lately been told that the decision of this case will be interesting to numbers whose rights are disputed on similar grounds.—

I am, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 22 August, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

In my absence with the directors of the Potomac navigation, to examine, the river and fix a plan of operations,[1] your favor, begun on the 23d and ended the 31st of July, came to this place. I am sorry to hear of your late indisposition, but congratulate you on your recovery, hoping the reëstablishment of your health may be of long continuance. * * *

It is to be hoped, that our minister at the court of London will bring that government to an explanation respecting the western posts, which it still retains on the American side the line, contrary to the spirit, if not the letter of the treaty. My opinion from the

[1] The object of this tour was to inspect minutely the course of the Potomac from Georgetown to Harper's Ferry, and ascertain in what places and to what extent it was necessary to construct canals and remove obstructions in the river. The directors went up by land, part of the distance on one side and part on the other; but they returned from Harper's Ferry to the head of the Great Falls above Georgetown in boats; thus effecting a thorough examination of the river. General Washington, as usual wherever he moved, attracted the attention of the people and demonstrations of respect for his person. The following is an extract from his *Diary*.

"*August 5th.*—After breakfast, and after directing Mr. Rumsey, when he had marked the way and set the laborers at work, to meet us at Harper's Ferry, myself and the directors set out for the same place by way of Fredericktown in Maryland. Dined at a Dutchman's two miles above the mouth of the Monococy, and reached Fredericktown about five o'clock. Drank tea, supped, and lodged at Governor Johnson's. In the evening the bells rang and guns were fired; and a committee waited upon me by order of the gentlemen of the town to request, that I would stay the next day and partake of a public dinner, which the town were desirous of giving me. But, as arrangements had been made, and the time for examining the Shenandoah Falls, previously to the day fixed for receiving laborers into pay, was short, I found it most expedient to decline the honor."

first, and so I declared it, was, that these posts would be detained from us as long as they could be held under any pretence whatsoever. I have not changed it, though I wish for cause to do so, as it may become a serious matter. However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it, that the navigation of the Mississippi, *at this time*, ought to be no object with us.[1] On the contrary, until we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic States and the western territory, the obstruction had better remain. There is nothing which binds one county or one State to another, but interest. Without this cement the western inhabitants, who more than probably will be composed in a great degree of foreigners, can have no predilection for us, and a commercial connexion is the only tie we can have upon them. It is clear to me, that the trade of the Lakes, and of the River Ohio, as low as the Great Kanhawa if not to the Falls, may be brought to the Atlantic ports easier and cheaper, taking the *whole* voyage together, than it can be carried to New Orleans; but, once open the door to the latter before the obstructions are removed from the former, let commercial connexions, which lead to others, be formed, and the habit of that trade well established, and it will be found to be no easy matter to divert it; and *vice versâ*. When the settlements are stronger and more extended to the west-

[1] Washington was somewhat singular in this opinion, for a large majority of Virginians were opposed even to a temporary occlusion of the Mississippi, even when accompanied by no determination of the right to navigate the river. The arrival of Gardoqui was at this time looked forward to as offering a settlement of the question.

ward, the navigation of the Mississippi will be an object of importance, and we shall then be able, (reserving our claims,) to speak a more efficacious language, than policy, I think, dictates at present.[1]

I never have and I hope never shall hear, any serious mention of a paper emission in this State; yet such a thing may be in agitation. Ignorance and design are productive of much mischief. The first are the tool of the latter, and are often set to work suddenly and unexpectedly. Those, with whom I have conversed on the subject in this part of the State, reprobate the idea exceedingly.[2]

We have lately had the pleasure of Miss Lee's and

[1] In writing on this subject to M. de Marbois, who had spoken of a rencounter between the Spaniards at Fort Natchez and the inhabitants in that neighborhood, General Washington said: "I wish something disagreeable may not result from the contentions respecting the navigation of the River Mississippi. The emigration to the waters thereof is astonishingly great, and chiefly by a description of people, who are not very subordinate to the laws and constitution of the States they go from. Whether the prohibition of the Spaniards, therefore, is just or unjust, politic or impolitic, it will be with difficulty, that people of this class can be restrained from the enjoyment of natural advantages."—June 18th.

[2] The following questions and sentiments were contained in Mr. Lee's letter, to which this is an answer.

"Is it possible that a plan can be formed for issuing a large sum of paper money by the next Assembly? I do verily believe, that the greatest foes we have in the world could not devise a more effectual plan for ruining Virginia. I should suppose, that every friend to his country, every honest and sober man, would join heartily to reprobate so nefarious a plan of speculation."

The sentiments of George Mason on the same subject may be seen in the following extract from a letter written by him to General Washington at a somewhat later date. "I have heard nothing from the Assembly," said he, "except vague reports of their being resolved to issue a paper currency; upon what principle or funds I know not; perhaps upon the old threadbare security of pledging solemnly the public credit. I believe such an experiment would prove similar to the old vulgar adage of carrying a horse to the water. They may pass a law to issue it, but twenty laws will not make the people receive it."—November 9th.

Miss Hannah's company at this place. They were both well five days ago. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her compliments; and with sentiments of great respect, esteem, and regard, I am, &c.

P. S. Your name, I well remember, stands among those of the subscribers for a share in the Potomac navigation.

TO JAMES McHENRY, IN CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 22 August, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

* * * * * *

As I have ever been a friend to adequate powers of Congress, without which it is evident to me we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe, I am sorry I cannot agree with you in sentiment not to enlarge them for the regulating of commerce. I have neither time nor abilities to enter into a full discussion of this subject; but it should seem to me, that your arguments against it, principally that some States may be more benefited than others by a commercial regulation, apply to every matter of general utility. Can there be a case enumerated, in which this argument has not its force in a greater or less degree? We are either a united people under one head and for federal purposes, or we are thirteen independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other. If the former, whatever such a majority of the States, as the constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit

of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority. Let the southern States always be represented; let them act more in union; let them declare freely and boldly what is for the interest of, and what is prejudicial to, their constituents; and there will, there must be, an accommodating spirit. In the establishment of a navigation act, this in a particular manner ought, and will doubtless be attended to. If the assent of nine, or as some propose of eleven States, is necessary to give validity to a commercial system, it insures this measure, or it cannot be obtained.

Wherein then lies the danger? But if your fears are in danger of being realized, cannot certain provisos in the ordinance guard against the evil; I see no difficulty in this, if the southern delegates would give their attendance in Congress, and follow the example, if it should be set them, of hanging together to counteract combinations. I confess to you candidly, that I can foresee no evil greater than disunion; than those *unreasonable* jealousies, (I say *unreasonable*, because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity,) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils to the prevention of real ones.

As you have asked the question, I answer, I do not know that we can enter upon a war of imposts with Great Britain, or any other foreign power; but we are certain, that this war has been waged against us by

the former; *professedly* upon a belief that we never could unite in opposition to it; and I *believe* there is no way of putting an end to, or at least of stopping the increase of it, but to convince them of the contrary. Our trade, in all points of view, is as essential to Great Britain, as hers is to us; and she will exchange it upon reciprocal and liberal terms, if better cannot be had. It can hardly be supposed, I think, that the carrying business will devolve wholly on the States you have named, or remain long with them if it should; for either Great Britain will depart from her present contracted system, or the policy of the southern States in framing the act of navigation, or by laws passed by themselves individually, will devise ways and means to encourage seamen for the transportation of the product of their respective countries or for the encouragement of. — But, admitting the contrary, if the Union is considered as permanent, and on this I presume all superstructures are built, had we not better encourage seamen among ourselves, with less imports, than divide it with foreigners, and by increasing the amount of them ruin our merchants, and greatly injuring the mass of our citizens.

To sum up the whole, I foresee, or think I do it, the many advantages which will arise from giving powers of this kind to Congress (if a sufficient number of States are required to exercise them), without any evil, save that which may proceed from inattention, or want of wisdom in the formation of the act; whilst, without them, we stand in a ridiculous point of view in the eyes of the nations of the world, with whom we are attempt-

ing to enter into commercial treaties, without means of carrying them into effect; who must see and feel, that the Union or the Sates individually are sovereigns, as best suits their purposes; in a word, that we are one nation to-day and thirteen to-morrow. Who will treat with us on such terms—but perhaps I have gone too far and therefore will only add, that Mrs. Washington offers her compliments and best wishes for you, and that with great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO WILLIAM GRAYSON, IN CONGRESS.

DEAR SIR, MOUNT VERNON, 22 August, 1785.

* * * * * *

I thank you for the several articles of intelligence contained in your letter, and for the propositions respecting a coinage of gold, silver, and copper; a measure, which, in my opinion, is become indispensably necessary. Mr. Jefferson's ideas upon this subject are plain and simple; well adapted, I think, to the nature of the case, as he has exemplified by the plan.[1] Without a coinage, or unless some stop can be put to the cutting and clipping of money, our dollars, pistareens, &c., will be converted, as Teague says, into *five* quarters; and a man must travel with

[1] This plan was the one which has since been carried into use. Mr. Jefferson took the dollar as a *unit*, and then divided it decimally for the other denominations. He wrote a memoir on the subject for the consideration of Congress.—*Jefferson's Writings*, vol. i., p. 133. A very ingenious scheme had been previously devised by Gouverneur Morris, founded on similar principles; but, as a different *unit* was adopted, the notation was less simple.—Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., pp. 273–281.

a pair of money scales in his pocket, or run the risk of receiving gold at one fourth less by weight than it counts.

I have ever been a friend to adequate congressional powers; consequently I wish to see the ninth article of the confederation amended and extended.[1] Without these powers we cannot support a national character, and must appear contemptible in the eyes of Europe. But to you, my dear Sir, I will candidly confess, that in my opinion it is of little avail to give these to Congress. The members seem to be so much afraid of exerting those, which they already have, that no opportunity is slipped of surrendering them, or referring the exercise of them to the States individually. Instance your late ordinance respecting the disposal of the western lands, in which no State with the smallest propriety could have obtruded an interference. No doubt but the information of Congress from the back country is better than mine, respecting the operation of this ordinance; but I have understood from some sensible people therefrom that, besides running they know not where to purchase, the lands are of so versatile a nature, that, to the end of time, they will not, by those who are acquainted therewith, be purchased either in townships or by square miles. This, if I recollect right,

[1] A proposal to confer upon Congress the regulation of commerce. Madison, while approving of the powers, thought that "the only circumstance which promises a favorable hearing to the meditated proposition of Congress is, that the power which it asks is to be exerted against Great Britain, and the proposition will consequently be seconded by the animosities which still prevail in a strong degree against her."

was the sentiment I delivered to you, on the first mention of the matter; but past experience, you said, was brought forward in support of the measure, and appealed to for the issue. I submitted therefore to its decision, but still retained my opinion.

We have got the Potomac navigation in hand. Workmen are employed, under the best manager and assistants we could obtain, at the Falls of Shenandoah and Seneca; and I am happy to inform you, that, upon a critical examination of them by the directors, the manager, and myself, we are unanimously of opinion, that the difficulties at these two places do not exceed the expectations we had formed of them; and that the navigation through them might be effected without the aid of locks. How far we may have been deceived with respect to the first, (as the water though low may yet fall), I shall not decide; but we are not mistaken, I think, in our conjectures of the other. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.[1]

[1] "It gives me great pleasure to find by my last letters from France, that the dark clouds which hung on your hemisphere are vanishing before the all-chearful sunshine of peace. My first wish is to see the blessings of it diffused through all countries, and among all ranks in every country; and that we should consider ourselves as the children of a common parent, and so disposed to acts of brotherly kindness towards one another. In that case all restrictions of trade would vanish; we should take your wines, your fruits and surplusage of other articles; and give you in return our oils, our fish, tobacco, naval stores, &c., and in like manner we should exchange produce with other countries, to our reciprocal advantage. The Globe is large enough. Why then need we wrangle for a small spot of it? If one country cannot contain us, another should open its arms to us. But these halcyon days (if they ever did exist) are now no more; a wise Providence, I presume, has ordered it otherwise; and we must go on in the old way, disputing and now and then fighting, until the Globe itself is disolved."—*Washington to the Marquis de Chastellux*, 5 September, 1785.

TO JOHN DE NEUFVILLE.

MOUNT VERNON, 8 September, 1785.

SIR,

I have lately been honored with your favors of the 10th and 15th of March—Until the latter explained the mistake of the former, I was puzzled to get at the meaning of it; because, I did not recollect that I had ever made application to your Son for the loan of any money; but since the subject has been started, I will take the liberty of pursuing it.—

I am a member of a Company in this State, who associated many years ago for the purpose of reclaiming what is called the Great Dismal Swamp near Norfolk. — The war gave considerable interruption, indeed almost put an entire stop to the progress of the business; but in May last the members (for the first time since the war) had a meeting, & resolved to prosecute the work with vigor:—for this purpose they are inclined to borrow money on interest; & to import, if they can do it upon advantageous, terms, a number of Hollanders, or Germans, as being best acquainted with the nature of the work; which is to drain & bank level, low & wet Land, which would from its situation, & the quality of its soil, be invaluable if accomplished.—

Individually, the members possess considerable property—as a company they have little money at command; but would I believe, bind themselves jointly & severally for the repayment of the principal sum borrowed, in a given number of years; & for such interest as may be agreed upon annually:—& as a

collateral security they would moreover, I imagine, mortgage the Estate which they are about to improve.—

Under this Statement of the matter, permit me to ask you frankly, if four or five thousand pounds could be borrowed in Amsterdam—at what interest & for how long a term? and whether it is a matter which could be easily accomplished, to import about three hundred laborers (a few women among them would be no objection)—for what time they might be engaged & upon what wages? and what expence would attend the importation? * * *

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

MOUNT VERNON, 16 September, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

It was not in my power to obtain the enclosed in time, to forward them by the last mail; but they will, I hope, reach you seasonably for your intended meeting on the 26th—by the present mail.

I feel very sensibly, the honor and confidence which has been reposed in me by the James river company; and regret that it will not be in my power to discharge the duties of the office of President of the Board of Directors, with that punctuality and attention which the trust requires.—Every service however that I can render, compatible with my other avocations, shall be afforded with pleasure, and I am happy in being associated in the business with gentlemen so competent

to the purposes of their appointment—and from what I have heard of the navigation, and seen of the Falls, I think your work may be soon and easily accomplished—and that it will be of great public utility, as well as private emolument to the subscribers when done :—for the advantage of both, tho' I believe the business lies in another line, I would earnestly recommend it to you to press the execution of the survey between James river and the navigable waters of the Kanhawa, and a proper investigation of the latter.—It will be a source of great commerce with the capitol and in my opinion will be productive of great political consequences to this country :—the business of a similar nature, as it respects this river, is at an entire stand.—Mr. Massey who was first appointed on the part of this State, having declined acting ; the Maryland Commissioner knows of no other in his room, and is unable, tho' ready to proceed.

Besides what appears in the minutes, which are enclosed, it is in contemplation by the Board of Directors of the Navigation of this river, to endeavor to hire a number of Slaves next year as laborers thereon,—and as the Great Falls are tremendous, and the navigation thereof, in whatever manner it is attempted, will require much skill and practical knowledge in the execution ; we propose, before this is undertaken, to invite a proper person from Europe, who has been employed in works of this kind, as a superintendant of it :—With respect to the other parts of the river, tho' what are called the Shanandoah Falls are as difficult in my opinion as

the Falls of James river, at Westham, we seem to have confidence enough in ourselves to undertake them; and mean to do so without having recourse to either canals or Locks.—Thro' all the Falls and rapids *above the Great falls*, we mean to attempt nothing more than to open a strait passage to avoid, as much as possible, currents;—giving sufficient depth, and as much smoothness as may be to the surface;—and if Rumsey's project fails (of which he has not the smallest apprehension) to pull the Boats up by chains floated by buoys:—the latter, when Ice begins to form, may be slipped and thereby saved; whilst the former rivoted to rocks at bottom, may remain during the intemperate season undisturbed and without injury.

Upon an estimate of the expence of those chains and Buoys, we (that is, the Directors of the Potomac navigation and myself) are of opinion, without having an eye to the probable advantages which are expected to be derived from Rumsey's mechanical discovery, that it will be infinitely less than what must arise from cutting canals, building Locks, making track paths, &c., as was the design of Ballendine and others; and will have this advantage over them, that when once done, that is when the passage is opened in a straight direction in the natural bed of the river, it is done as it were forever, whereas canals and Locks, besides the natural decay of them, are exposed to much injury from Ice, drift-wood, and even the common freshes;—in a word, are never safe where there are such sudden inundations and violent torrents, as the rivers in this country are subject to.

It has so happened that Thursday the 22d inst. is a day of my own appointing to meet the Directors at the Great Falls of this river, for the purpose of examining the place proposed for a canal; and the river and ground from thence to tide water, on which business I expect to be employed (at least to be from home) four or five days.

Altho' I see no impropriety myself in laying the Proceedings of the Potomac Company before the Board of Directors of the James river navigation, it being my wish that every intelligence which one can give to the other should be mutually afforded; yet it is my desire that the act may be considered as transmitted for the private information (if it should convey any light) of yourself and the Directors.—

We are endeavoring to engage our miners to bore by the foot; rather than by the day; but as yet have not agreed with any in this way:—they ask a shilling, which we think is too much—to common labourers we pay 40/ per month; and we find paying the workmen every fortnight, rather troublesome—once a month would do better:—as they will be frequently moving, we have provided Tents as most convenient & least expensive, for their accommodation.—

I find I have been under a mistake with respect to the subscriptions for the James river navigation;—I conceived the Books were to lie open 'till the general meeting appointed (as that for this river was) by law;—and if the aggregate amounted to more than the sum required by the act, at such meeting—

they were then to be reduced in the manner therein directed.

The expression of the Law, "the highest point practicable"—is certainly too indefinite; and in the hurry which the act passed, the import of it was not sufficiently adverted to:—but how far it may be politic for the Potomac Company to meddle in the matter, I will not at this moment undertake to decide; as the concurrence of *two* States is required to effect the Alteration, and as one of them, it is said by those who are unfriendly to the measure, has been surprized into it.—

If it would not be too troublesome for your Secretary, it would be a satisfaction to me to receive a copy of your proceedings—With great esteem & sincere friendship, I am, &c.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MOUNT VERNON, 26 September, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 10th and 17th of July, which were committed to the care of M. Houdon; but I have not yet had the pleasure to see that gentleman. His instruments and materials, (Doctor Franklin informs me,) were sent down the Seine; but, not being arrived when the ship left Havre, he was obliged to leave them, and is now busied in supplying himself with others at Philadelphia, with which, when done, he will come on to this place. I shall take great pleasure in showing M.

Houdon every civility and attention in my power during his stay in this country; for I feel myself under personal obligation to you and Dr. Franklin (as the State of Virginia has done me the honor to direct a statue to be erected to my memory) for having placed the execution in the hands of so eminent an artist, and so worthy a character.[1]

I have the further pleasure to inform you and should have done it long since, had I not supposed that your information would have been more full and perfect from some of your friends in the Assembly, that a resolution of the Assembly authorized the Executive to appoint commissioners to explore and report the best communication between the waters

[1] Writing to Lafayette, November 8th, Washington said :—

"I have now to thank you for your favors of the 9th and 14th of July; the first by M. Houdon, who stayed no more than a fortnight with me, and to whom, for his trouble and risk in crossing the seas (although I had no agency in the business), I feel myself under personal obligations. . . .

"Doctor Franklin has met with a grateful reception in Pennsylvania. He has again embarked on a troubled ocean; I am persuaded with the best designs, and I wish his purposes may be answered, which undoubtedly are to reconcile the jarring interests of the State. He permitted himself to be nominated for the city of Philadelphia as a counsellor, a step to the chair, which no doubt he will fill; but whether to the satisfaction of both parties is a question of some magnitude, and of real importance to himself, at least to his quiet. His grandson shall meet with every civility and attention I can show him, when occasions offer."

"Gatteaux the engraver lives in the Street St. Thomas de Louvre, opposite the Treasury of the Duke de Chartres. Now that there is no obstacle to commencing the medal for Genl. Washington since Houdon's return, I could wish (should it not be giving you too much trouble) that you would send for Du Vivier who lives in the Old Louvre, and propose to him undertaking it upon exactly the terms he had offered, which I think were 2400 livres, besides the gold & expense of coming. If he should not [ ] it we must let it rest until Dupre shall have finished Genl. Greene's. Gatteaux has a paper on which is the description of Genl. Washington's medal."—*D. Humphreys to Jefferson*, 30 January, 1786.

of Elizabeth river and those of Albermarle;—that the commissioners have proceeded to the Survey—and have reported in favor of that which will pass thro' Drummonds Pond to the Pasquotank. But what will be the result, I am unable to inform you—as I find by some of the principal characters of North Carolina (members of Congress) who have called here; that a considerable jealousy prevails, and a powerful opposition will be given to any water communication between the two States—lest it should draw their exports from them.

I am very happy to find, that your sentiments respecting the interest the Assembly was pleased to give me in the two navigations of the Potomac and James Rivers coincide with my own. I never for a moment entertained an idea of accepting it. The difficulty, which labored in my mind was how to refuse without giving offence. Ultimately I have it in contemplation to apply the profits arising from the tolls to some public use. In this, if I knew how, I would meet the wishes of the Assembly; but, if I am not able to come at these, my own inclination leads me to apply them to the establishment of two charity schools, one on each river, for the education and support of poor children, especially the descendants of those, who have fallen in defence of their country.

I can say nothing decisively respecting the western settlement of this State. The inhabitants of Kentucky have held several conventions, and have resolved to apply for a separation; but what may be the final issue of it, is not for me to inform you. Opinions,

as far as they have come to my knowledge, are diverse. I have uniformly given it as mine, to meet them upon their own ground, draw the best line and best terms we can, and part good friends. After the next session of our Assembly, more may be learned and communicated; and, if you should not receive it through a better channel, I will have the honor to inform you.[1]

I am sorry I cannot give you full information respecting Bushnell's project for the destruction of ships. No interesting experiments having been made, and my memory being bad, I may in some measure be mistaken in what I am about to relate. Bushnell is a man of great mechanical powers, fertile of invention and master of execution. He came to me in 1776, recommended by Governor Trumbull and other respectable characters, who were converts to

[1] Virginia had always maintained her claims to Kentucky, and when George Rogers Clark, acting under orders from that State, conquered Illinois (1778), this claim appeared to be established beyond any question. Lands were freely granted, and counties marked off (1783), and a judiciary and local government constituted. The removal, in great measure, of the fears of Indian incursions, and the close of the Revolution, turned a large tide of emigration to this district, which soon realized the inconvenience of recognizing a government so remote as that of Virginia was. The threat of an Indian raid drew together the political elements of the country, and a council, assembled for military purposes, concluded that the time had come when Kentucky should be erected into "a separate and independent State," with a local government of full powers (November, 1784). It was not until August, 1785, that a regular convention met and framed a memorial to the Virginia legislature praying for a separation, which was granted by an act passed January 10, 1786, subject to the approval of the Continental Congress. Through some unavoidable delays the question could not be acted upon within the period fixed, and securing an extension, it was in June, 1788, that Congress took the necessary steps to admit Kentucky to the Confederation, steps that were again blocked by the adoption of the new Constitution.

his plan. Although I wanted faith myself, I furnished him with money and other aids to carry his plan into execution. He labored for some time ineffectually; and, though the advocates of his scheme continued sanguine, he never did succeed. One accident or another always intervened. I then thought, and still think, that it was an effort of genius, but that too many things were necessary to be combined, to expect much from the issue against an enemy, who are always upon guard.

That he had a machine so contrived, as to carry him under water at any depth he chose, and for a considerable time and distance, with an appendix to it, charged with powder, which he could fasten to a ship, and give fire to in a given time sufficient for his returning, and by means thereof destroy it, are facts, I believe, which admit of little doubt. But then, where it was to operate against an enemy, it was no easy matter to get a person hardy enough to encounter the variety of dangers, to which he would be exposed; first, from the novelty; secondly, from the difficulty of conducting the machine, and governing it under water, on account of the current, &c.; and thirdly, the consequent uncertainty of hitting the object devoted to destruction, without rising frequently above water for fresh observation, which, when near the vessel, would expose the adventurer to a discovery and to almost certain death. To these causes I always ascribed the non-performance of his plan, as he wanted nothing that I could furnish to insure the success of it. This, to the best of my recol-

lection, is a true state of the case; but Humphreys, if I mistake not, being one of his converts, will be able to give you a more perfect account of it than I have done. With perfect esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GEORGE MASON.

MOUNT VERNON, 3 October, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have this moment received yours of yesterday's date, enclosing a memorial and remonstrance against the Assessment Bill, which I will read with attention. At *present* I am unable to do it, on account of company. The bill itself I do not recollect ever to have read; with attention I am certain I never did, but will compare them together.

Although no man's sentiments are more opposed to *any kind* of restraint upon religious principles than mine are, yet I must confess, that I am not amongst the number of those, who are so much alarmed at the thoughts of making people pay towards the support of that which they profess, if of the denomination of Christians, or declare themselves Jews, Mahometans, or otherwise, and thereby obtain proper relief. As the matter now stands, I wish an assessment had never been agitated, and as it has gone so far, that the bill could not die an easy death; because I think it will be productive of more quiet to the State, than by enacting it into a law, which in my opinion would be impolitic, admitting there is a decided majority

for it, to the disquiet of a respectable minority. In the former case, the matter will soon subside; in the latter, it will rankle and perhaps convulse the State. The dinner-bell rings, and I must conclude with an expression of my concern for your indisposition. Sincerely and affectionately, I am, &c.[1]

[1] A bill had been brought into the House of Delegates in December, 1784, and twice read, for establishing a provision for teachers of the Christian religion. By the principles of the bill, a specified tax was to be collected from every person in the commonwealth subject to pay taxes for other purposes; and the money raised by virtue of this act was to be appropriated by the vestries, elders, or directors of each religious society to a provision for a minister or teacher of the gospel of their denomination, or to the providing of places of worship. Quakers and Mennonists were to receive the amount collected among themselves, but they were to employ it in promoting their particular mode of worship. When the bill came up for a third reading, on the 24th of December, a motion was made to postpone it till the fourth Thursday in November, and this motion was carried by a vote of forty-five to thirty-eight. Before the time arrived, remonstrances and memorials against it were prepared, and signatures obtained from those who were opposed to the measure. The consequence seems to have been a law of a very different complexion, in the preamble of which religious freedom is asserted in its fullest latitude, and by which it was enacted, "that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or otherwise burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to possess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities." —*Hening's Statutes*, vol. xii., p. 86.

END OF VOL. X.

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